



**ADRA Norway | Humanitarian Strategy
2021-2025**

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Introduction

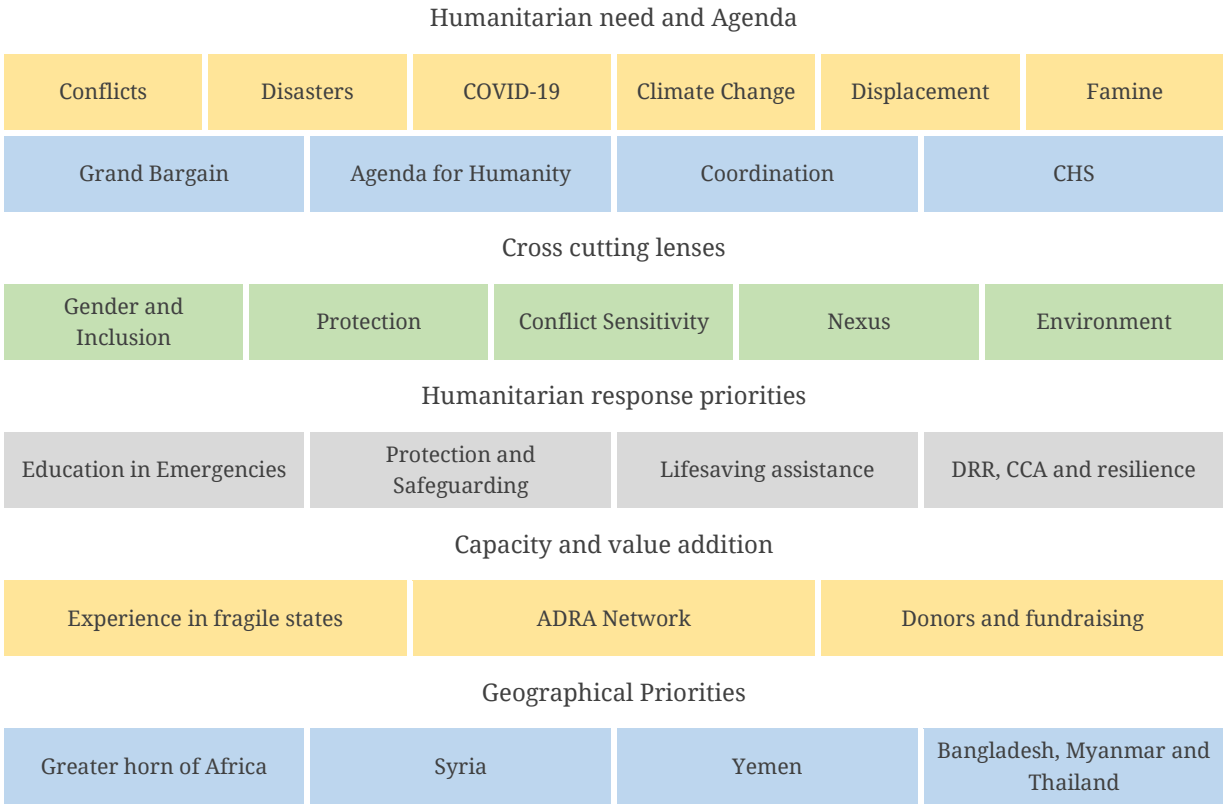
The scale and complexity of humanitarian crises globally continues to grow amidst escalating and protracted conflict, natural disasters, climate change and severe weather conditions. This humanitarian strategy document contributes towards strategic priority two of the ADRA Norway strategy, *we show solidarity with children, youth, women and men in the midst of humanitarian crises through responses that uphold dignity, address immediate needs, strengthen resilience, ensure protection and promote early recovery* and provides a framework for ADRA Norway’s humanitarian action and efforts to deliver a more rapid, effective and at-scale humanitarian response, to sudden onset disasters and in protracted crises and increase complementarity between humanitarian action and our development programming.

ADRA Norway works with the global ADRA Network to meet life-saving needs and upholds humanitarian principles, contributing towards initiatives such as the ‘Grand Bargain’ and the ‘Action for Change’ to increase transparency, engagement and accountability to affected people and communities, putting people at the centre of our responses and empowering local actors. Our responses contribute towards increased equality, protection and inclusion and give voice to women, girls and persons with disability. We see our response as strongly integrated, where our education responses will be foundational to our work.

ADRA Norway has identified four focus areas:

- Education in emergencies
- Protection and safeguarding
- Lifesaving humanitarian assistance
- Disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience

Outline of the Humanitarian Strategy



Humanitarian context and global trends

The frequency and intensity of manmade and natural disasters and numbers of people worldwide affected by them continue to grow. In 2020, nearly 168 million people were identified by global humanitarian coordination as being in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. This represents 1 in about 45 people in the world, and is the highest figure in decades. In 2021, nearly twice as many people will require humanitarian assistance as five years ago. The situation in many countries is compounded by pre-existing drivers of humanitarian needs associated with conflict, displacement, low education, food insecurity, poor development, inequalities, climate change and inadequate social safety nets.

Protracted crises and displacement

Violent armed conflicts and persecution are driving a record number of people from their homes, resulting in the highest levels of displacement on record. At the end of 2019, some 71.6 million people were forcibly displaced, 25.9 million refugees and 45.7 million internally displaced persons,¹ and a further 14.6 million new displacements in the first six months of 2020. Women and men, girls and boys, have different roles and positions in the societies they live in, and are affected in different ways by a conflict.² IDPs and refugees are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 and its secondary effects. The risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in camp or camp-like settings remains real. This is due to crowded living conditions and limited access to water, sanitation and health facilities. Armed conflict has a particularly devastating and disproportionate impact on persons with disabilities.³

77 million people in 22 countries experienced hunger due to armed violence and insecurity in 2019. Seventy per cent of the top 20 countries at risk of food insecurity are in fragile and conflict-affected situations.⁴ Some of the highest proportions of food-insecure and malnourished children in the world are now concentrated in conflict zones. Global poverty is estimated to increase in 2021 by an additional 100 million people.⁵ By the end of 2020, the number of acutely food insecure people increased to 270 million due to COVID-19. Urgent and sustained work by humanitarian and development actors is needed to avoid further deterioration and to prevent a risk of famine in areas already on the brink of starvation.⁶ The World Food Programme also expects a doubling of the number of people facing acute food insecurity.⁷

Crises arising from COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global health crisis that is increasing human suffering, crippling the global economy and upending people's lives. Infectious diseases are becoming more prevalent and harder to control, because of conflict, weak health systems, poor water and sanitation, and lack of access to vaccinations.⁸ The direct health impacts of COVID-19 will be dwarfed by the indirect ones. These include disruptions to immunization campaigns and essential health services, rising food insecurity and the economic fallout, all of which will hit forcibly displaced persons particularly hard, depriving many of their livelihoods and jobs, particularly in the informal economy. According to a survey of IDPs and refugees in 14 countries, 71 per cent reported difficulty paying rent or other basic housing costs (many had been evicted) and 70 per cent had reduced the number of meals for their household.⁹ By the end of 2020, the number of acutely food insecure people could increase to 270 million due to COVID-19, representing an 82 per cent increase compared to the number of acutely food insecure people pre-COVID-19.¹⁰ Urgent and sustained humanitarian action is needed to avoid further deterioration and to prevent a risk of famine in areas already on the brink of starvation.¹⁰

¹ UNHCR (2020), <https://www.unhcr.org/internally-displaced-people.html>

² Norwegian Government (2019), Women, Peace and Security Action plan (2019-2022), p. 7.

https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/dokumenter/planer/actionplan_wps2019.pdf

³ Priddy, A (2019) Disability and Armed Conflict

<https://www.geneva-academy.ch/joomlatools-files/docman-files/Academy%20Briefing%202014-interactif.pdf>

⁴ Humanitarian Needs Overview (2021), p. 32 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GHO2021_EN.pdf

⁵ COVID-19 and global poverty: Are LDCs being left behind? (2020), p. 16.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341847417_COVID-19_and_global_poverty_Are_LDCs_being_left_behind

⁶ Global Humanitarian Overview (2021) p 32

⁷ WFP, 2020 <https://www.wfp.org/news/covid-19-will-double-number-people-facing-food-crises-unless-swift-action-taken>

⁸ <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Global-Humanitarian-Response-Plan-COVID-19.pdf>

⁹ UN Secretary-General, Policy Brief: COVID-19 and People on the Move, (2020), p. 11/ GHO 2021, p. 30

¹⁰ Global Humanitarian Overview (2021), p 32

Impacts of climate change

Climate change continues to seriously challenge humanitarian response efforts. The link between human-induced climate change and increasing humanitarian needs is well recognized. The last decade was the hottest on record. Climate change alters weather patterns, disaster frequency, and water and food provision, and impacts on humanitarian needs in relation to health, migration, political instability and livelihoods. The degree and extent of climate-related humanitarian needs depend on existing vulnerabilities of affected populations. A recent report from the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent (IFRC) estimates that by 2050, without significant action to curb human induced climate change, 200 million people could need humanitarian aid as a result of climate-related disasters and associated socioeconomic shocks. More than 40 percent of the countries experiencing a food crisis in 2017 faced the double burden of climatic shocks and conflict. Conflicts harm the structures and systems that are necessary to facilitate adaptation to climate change.¹¹

In 2019, 396 natural disasters were reported, above the annual average of the last 10 years, killing 11,755 people and affecting nearly 95 million others. Natural disasters triggered 24.9 million new displacements in 2019, the highest recorded figure since 2012. Swarms of desert locusts, triggered by unusual weather conditions, are threatening large areas of pastures and crops in the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. The 2020 locust outbreak represented the worst infestation in 25 years in Somalia and Ethiopia, and the worst in 70 years in Kenya¹² and result in further hunger and famine.

Humanitarian Agenda

As a member of InterAction,¹³ which is an alliance of international organizations, ADRA endorsed the Grand Bargain and the Agenda for Humanity arising from the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, supporting initiatives to prevent and end conflicts, build respect for rules of war, leave no one behind, work differently with local systems through nexus approaches and invest in local capacities. We will engage systematically on the Agenda for Humanity through the ADRA humanitarian practitioners working group, which ADRA Norway is a co-chair of, and through engagement in global forums such as *Education cannot wait Non-Government Organization* advisory and the *Education in Emergencies Global Hub*. ADRA Norway will be a strong advocate in international forums of the need to strengthen the protection of civilians, and support relevant measures in this area and work to improve the safety of our workers in the field. We are committed to improving accountability towards crisis-affected people and quality of humanitarian work, increasing the use of cash programming, putting people at the centre of our response and to ensuring participation of minorities and vulnerable groups, women and persons with disabilities. We will support initiatives to protect education from attack in crisis-affected countries and the implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration and draw attention to methods of warfare that affect children and young people.

ADRA Norway is a signatory of the ICRC Code of Conduct, upholds humanitarian standards and engages fully in humanitarian coordination. In order to ensure strong organizational systems and sound program management, the ADRA International network has since 2018 developed a licensing and accreditation system with standards within the areas of mission and values, governance and leadership, people management, work health, safety and security, financial and risk management, development and humanitarian program management, partnerships and networking. The standards reflect general international standards of the business and include all the Core Humanitarian Standards.

ADRA Norway is also engaged in an ADRA Network initiative to advance the localization agenda in line with growing calls for reform of the humanitarian system to address the power imbalances, inequality and racism present in humanitarian aid sector. This includes reflection on our structures, policies and practices and increased focus on social justice, solidarity and equity, with priority to increasing dialogue and strengthening participation by and accountability to affected population groups and engagement with local stakeholders in decision-making.

¹¹https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/HAG-HH-Climate-change-PP_Final_Electronic.pdf
https://www.rodekors.no/globalassets/globalt/rapporter-program-avtaler/humanitar-analyse-rapporter/norwegian-redcross_report_overlapping-vulnerabilities.pdf

¹² Global Humanitarian Overview (2021) p. 35

¹³ ADRA is a member of InterAction, <https://www.interaction.org/>

Norwegian Humanitarian Strategy

ADRA Norway aligns this humanitarian strategy with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Humanitarian Strategy¹⁴. This includes (a) a strong focus on protection, particularly relating to SGBV, child protection and safeguarding and work with refugees and IDPs. ADRA Norway programs in South Sudan and Uganda actively respond to protection cases and provide psychosocial support in areas where services are constrained or non-existent, (b) the use of cash in humanitarian response as a primary modality and increased engagement in global coordination mechanism regarding cash based assistance and (c) Building on ADRA Norway's existing work in fragile, conflict affected contexts of Africa and Asia which are primarily humanitarian-development-peace nexus programs to respond more effectively to humanitarian needs of our target communities and countries while addressing longer terms issues in protracted crisis situations. We will increase our political engagement with humanitarian actors within Norway and within the humanitarian sector and undertake more political engagement with decision makers in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to access funding for ADRA's work in crisis zones.

Cross cutting lenses

Gender equality

Critical to all responses and to resilient society is the foundation of healthy, educated and empowered girls and women. Gender equality is an important aspect of ADRA Norway's work, and we undertake this by identifying and addressing gender discriminatory practices, mainstreaming gender analysis to tailor approaches in program design and delivery including the use of gender, age and inclusion markers, addressing barriers to empowerment of women and girls, engaging with men and boys on social norms to address root causes of gender-based discrimination and modelling good gender practice within our organization.

Harmful practices, such as child marriage, female genital mutilation and son preference are among the most serious manifestations of discrimination against girls.¹⁵ The UN estimates that more than 650 million girls and women, and 115 million boys and men alive today, were married as children. Every day 33 000 girls are married off as child brides. Every year four million girls are subjected to genital mutilation. A total of 200 million women and girls alive today have been subjected to such practice. A preference for sons, leads to the devaluing of girls to the extent that they are neglected, subjected to violence and even murdered.

During conflict and crises, women and girls face heightened risks due to cultural and social norms defining gender stereotypes, and the breakdown of normal protection structures. Capacities and abilities can be easily overlooked when the voices of these girls and women are silenced. All forms of violence against women and girls are exacerbated during humanitarian crises and in emergency relief and recovery efforts women tend to be discriminated against due to existing norms and processes. And yet, many women do not have access to the information, decision-making power and influence necessary to adapt to their changing environment. ADRA Norway is committed to ensuring that women's and girls' voices and perspectives are placed at the centre of all our interventions, through targeted or mainstreamed programming and to inform intervention strategies and work on durable solutions. Women and girls will be involved in qualitative participatory research to deepen the understanding of their situations and support knowledge sharing.

Protective education is gender responsive and addresses the specific needs of and difficulties facing girls and women, boys and men. It provides support and teaches skills that help strengthen individuals' ability to rebuild their lives over the long-term. Education that continues without disruption in times of emergency can provide opportunities for women and girls to develop literacy skills, inform them about their rights and choices, and enable them to learn other essential skills. It also can help women process information about health-related issues and thus have more control over their lives. Studies have shown that maternal education is a strong factor in a child's chances of survival: girls with higher levels of education are associated with delayed marriage and childbirth and lower child mortality (UNESCO, 2011). Schools also can provide a safe environment in which women and girls are protected from gender-based violence and sexual or economic

¹⁴ Norway's Humanitarian Strategy (2018) <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/strategi-for-norsk-humanitar-politikk/id2608151/>

¹⁵ Norway's International Strategy to Eliminate Harmful Practices (2019-2023) https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/eliminate_harmful_practices/id2673335/

exploitation. Girls who are enrolled in school are less likely to be forced into an early marriage or early pregnancy. In the literature, interviews with girls indicate that they believe schools protect them from those risks.¹⁶

Inclusion of persons with disabilities

Persons with disabilities encounter multiple attitudinal and physical barriers in their day-to-day life, a situation made worse during and after humanitarian crises. Armed conflict has a disproportionate impact on persons with disabilities who face targeted killings, use as human shields and are at increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence. Little attention is paid to the situation of persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Persons with disabilities are more likely to be killed or injured because of inaccessible emergency information, evacuation procedures and shelters. Refugee and displacement camps and facilities often lack comprehensive procedures to identify refugee and internally displaced persons with disabilities, and consequently fail to ensure that they have equal access to essential services including food, water, shelter and medical care. There is also a failure to recognize the diversity among persons with disabilities.¹⁷ ADRA Norway is committed to ensuring inclusion of persons with disabilities through increased sensitivity of programming, tailoring of responses, capacity building of staff.

ADRA Norway has increased its engagement with Norwegian Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs) recently and is collaborating on inclusion programming with DPOs across implementing countries. A key commitment for the humanitarian response work of ADRA Norway will be to honour the slogan “nothing about us without us”. Disability can be forgotten in humanitarian assistance operations unless there is an active involvement or consultation with Disabled Persons’ Organizations (DPOs). We strive towards meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all stages of the humanitarian preparedness and response programs, from needs assessments, design, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

Protection and Human Rights

ADRA Norway is working to mainstream protection through all humanitarian interventions. Mainstreaming protection ensures that the protective impact of aid programming is maximized. Through the incorporation of protection principles into aid delivery, we aim to ensure that our activities target the most vulnerable, enhance safety, dignity, and promote and protect the human rights of the beneficiaries without contributing to or perpetuating discrimination, abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation. This includes elements recommended by the Global Protection Cluster, to prioritize safety and dignity, and avoid causing harm, to arrange for people’s access to assistance and services – in proportion to need and without any barriers (e.g. discrimination), to set-up appropriate mechanisms through which affected populations can measure the adequacy of interventions, and address concerns and complaints and to support the development of self-protection capacities and assist people to claim their rights, including – not exclusively – the rights to shelter, food, water and sanitation, health, and education.¹⁸

Conflict Sensitivity

When international assistance is delivered in the context of a violent conflict, it becomes a part of that context and thus also of the conflict. Although ADRA Norway is committed to upholding humanitarian principles and seeks to be impartial and neutral, we recognize that the impact of our assistance is not neutral and that humanitarian, development, or peacebuilding interventions sometimes have negative unintended side effects in conflict settings. Infusing resources (in terms of projects/programs) in environments of inequality, scarcity, conflict, polarization and intergroup tensions, can, and often does, exacerbate existing tensions and conflicts. On the other hand, the “positive” potential of aid to strengthen social cohesion (through participatory development etc.) and transforming conflicts is equally clear. It is a priority of ADRA Norway therefore to strengthen awareness of these facts during all phases of the program cycle, and incorporate conflict

¹⁶ INEE (2018), Where Child Protection and Education in Emergency Cross.

https://inee.org/system/files/resources/Where_Child_Protection_and_Education_in_Emergency_Cross_ENG.pdf

¹⁷ Atlas Alliance (2019) *The Forgotten People*

<https://atlas-alliansen.no/publication/the-forgotten-people-persons-with-disabilities-in-crises-and-conflicts-with-a-special-focus-on-people-with-intellectual-disabilities/>

¹⁸ Global Protection Cluster, brief on protection mainstreaming

https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/aors/protection_mainstreaming/brief_on_protection_mainstreaming.pdf

sensitivity and ‘do no harm’ approaches that minimize the risks and maximize the positive potential of working in conflict situations with conflict affected communities.

Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

Conflicts are increasingly protracted; climate-related shocks are more intense and frequent. Both contribute to a cycle of vulnerability. Sustainable development and durable solutions to displacement are not possible without peace. Humanitarian relief, development programs and peacebuilding are not serial processes: they are all needed at the same time. The idea is not new. The nexus is a continuation of long-running efforts in the humanitarian and development fields, such as ‘disaster risk reduction’ (DRR); ‘linking relief rehabilitation and development’ (LRRD); the ‘resilience agenda’; and the embedding of conflict sensitivity across responses. Meeting immediate needs at the same time as ensuring longer-term investment addressing the systemic causes of conflict and vulnerability – such as poverty, inequality and the lack of functioning accountability systems – has a better chance of reducing the impact of cyclical or recurrent shocks and stresses, and supporting the peace that is essential for development to be sustainable. We will take an integrated approach in our response to humanitarian crisis, with emphasis on early action, prevention and reduction of future needs. We will work to ensure that humanitarian action complements and engages with development cooperation and peacebuilding efforts through a nexus approach.

Migration and Displacement

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees are forced to flee their homes due to armed conflict, generalized violence, violations of human rights, natural or human-made disasters. Resolving situations of forcible displacement requires collective commitment to address humanitarian and protection needs of affected persons. Many people remain in limbo for years in IDP or refugee camps, urban slums, or other areas of refuge. Most protracted displacement is due to prolonged or frozen conflicts which have not yet reached a political solution. This is also often accompanied by a lack of alignment between broader development frameworks and specific plans for internal displacement solutions. Lacking a permanent home or sustainable livelihoods, they often have little prospect of reaching a durable solution. Durable solutions for IDPs include settling elsewhere in the country, integrating into the community where they are currently based; or returning home. ADRA Norway will increase its analysis of displacement and forced migration and further tailor sector responses to the situation of affected population groups. Currently the priority IDP and refugee groups that ADRA Norway works with include work with IDPs and refugees in countries including but not limited to Myanmar, Thailand, Bangladesh, South Sudan, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

Environment

The failure to take environmental issues into consideration during humanitarian action can undermine the core objective of saving lives and livelihoods. As part of our commitment to increasing the sensitivity of our program to environmental effects, ADRA Norway will work to enhance the environmental expertise through training, engagement of technical support services, and collaboration with environmental organizations, improve and formalize the use of existing monitoring and evaluation processes and develop additional ones to more systematically capture and act on environmental issues, engage more in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and preparedness when relevant to integrate the environment in our humanitarian work and build working relationships within existing forums and discussions (e.g. the Environment and Humanitarian Action (EHA) Network) to improve cooperation and coordination.¹⁹

Humanitarian response priorities

ADRA Norway is prioritizing humanitarian assistance in sectors where we believe we have particular added value and experience. Our core competency is in Education in Emergencies, although our responses will be complemented by responses that draw on our strong experience in delivering support for people in the midst of humanitarian crises. Protection and safeguarding, cash based assistance, material support and water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in communities and schools are essential elements in this work.

¹⁹ Environmental Mainstreaming in Humanitarian Interventions.
https://ecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/EMHIT_FINAL-REPORT-with-WWF-good-practice-2.pdf

Education in Emergencies

Too many of the world's children and young people, particularly those affected by emergencies and protracted crises, are being left behind. 75 million children aged 3-18 years are in the most desperate need of educational support. Children and youth are among the hardest to reach, and frequently live in or are displaced to contexts where governments cannot, or will not, provide them with education services. Refugees are five times less likely to attend school than other children, with only 50% of refugee children enrolled in primary school and less than 25% of refugee youth enrolled in secondary. Girls are particularly disadvantaged, being 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys in countries affected by conflict. To date, national and international responses have not been enough to adequately address education needs for crisis-affected children and young people. We are a strong voice in our global ADRA advocacy campaign, "*Every Child. Everywhere. In School*" and work to get out-of-school girls and boys into school.

In crises, targeted attacks on schools, as well as the military use of school buildings can impede access for all children and teachers. The Safe Schools Declaration and Framework for Action provides a broad range of possible actions to protect students, teachers, and schools from attack and military use. A school's location and hours of operation, facilities (i.e. water and sanitation), and infrastructure, such as walls that prevent outsiders from looking in, are significant in determining attendance, especially if girls can only travel short distances without a male companion. Both boys and girls are vulnerable to recruitment, attack, and injury, while girls are at greater risk of sexual abuse. Safe learning facilities (disaster-resilient infrastructure), school disaster management and risk reduction and resilience education, are essential for ensuring comprehensive school safety, and form the basis of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools.

Moreover, in the classroom, at school, at home and in the community, boys and girls may experience emotional and physical victimization, violence and abuse. The physical and psycho-social impacts of sexual and gender based violence have consequences for learning, attendance, retention and achievement. Linking sexual and reproductive health services to educational and learning opportunities can help mediate and prevent these negative impacts.²⁰

Education is part of the first response

Access to and provision of education is a human-right and all people affected by crisis and instability should have access to quality, safe, and relevant educational opportunities. Education, which is at the heart of our humanitarian work, is crucial for both the protection and healthy development of girls and boys affected by crises. Education interventions provide an avenue to deliver lifesaving information to children and families. Education provides a safe space and can contribute towards restoring a sense of normality and safety. It can be complemented with psychosocial support initiatives and provide important coping and life skills. Education can help children rebuild their lives and have more influence on the issues that affect them. It is also one of the best tools to invest in their long-term future, and in the peace, stability and economic growth of their countries. Complimentary interventions such as incentives for teachers, school feeding, WASH interventions and emergency health care (including distribution of mosquito-nets and hygiene articles) will be included to ensure good learning. This may be also done in a refugee camp context, in countries that experience crisis such as a sudden influx of refugees, and environments that have experienced natural disasters.

While there has been significant increase in commitments from humanitarian donors for funding for Education in Emergencies and new initiatives such as Education Cannot Wait (ECW) have seen significant additional support for this sector, many humanitarian donors still see education as something that can come later. ADRA Norway is engaging in global education coordination mechanisms out of the strong belief that Education in Emergencies is an essential life-saving and life-sustaining component of humanitarian response and nexus programming. All of ADRA Norway's education work is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals under Goal 4 (education) empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality. ADRA Norway adds its voice to global calls for the international humanitarian and development community to prioritize

²⁰ Education Cannot Wait Strategy (2018-2021)

https://www.educationcannotwait.org/downloads/reports-and-publications/?cp_reports-and-publications=3 other resources include:

<http://www.protectingeducation.org>, <http://www.unisdr.org/we/campaign/wiss> in collaboration with the Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction Education and Resilience in the Education Sector and

http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/Comprehensive_school_safety.pdf

education and warn against the severe consequences of underfunding in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Protection and Safeguarding

Schools and other learning spaces can facilitate access to essential and lifesaving services for children and youth, and their families, beyond the education sector. These services may include primary health care, nutritious food, clean water, psychosocial support, mental health assessments and targeted clinical interventions, regular adult supervision (e.g., by teachers and school administrators), and training in security measures and healthy living. Schools can also provide a safe physical space in which educators or social workers can identify children who need special attention, such as those experiencing severe physical, emotional, and/or mental abuse, separated and unaccompanied children, or children with disabilities; establish appropriate referral systems for protection violations in school and at home; and assist in the reunification of family members.

Educational activities and adult supervision also make it easier to screen for and monitor children needing special assistance in a systematic manner. Because education helps people access basic supplies and services, it can prevent deliberate child-family separation, such as families sending children to orphanages or child centres, or into the care of friends, in the belief that their children will receive better care.²¹ Children who attend school are kept busy during the day, and thus are less likely to be exposed to risks on the street, be forced into early marriage, or be coerced to engage in child labour or other high-risk activities. Educational activities can provide children with lifesaving and awareness raising information, which helps to reduce their risk of physical harm, disease, and death, and strengthens their coping strategies and survival skills. Examples of this include the dangers of landmines, general self-protection skills, how to reduce risk during disasters, and health and hygiene practices and knowledge

Sexual violence, mainly towards women and girls, remains prevalent in many armed conflicts and situations of violence, where it is used to terrorize, exert control, repress and displace communities. We will step up its efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence, providing psychosocial support to survivors and protection women, girls and boys in humanitarian crises. Persistent constraints on humanitarian access, attacks on aid workers and on health care and health personnel prolong suffering. The impact is especially severe on people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, and the consequences can be long-lasting. An estimated one in five people living in areas beset by armed conflict has a mental health condition including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder. ADRA Norway will be prioritizing this work by strengthening capacity of local partners and staff, strengthening systems and policies, developing strong approaches and capacity to provide psychosocial support/ psychological first aid and developing strategic partnerships for effective referrals.

Lifesaving humanitarian assistance

In situations of conflict and disasters such as famines, floods, cyclones or earthquakes, communities are often displaced, traumatized, hungry and dehydrated. ADRA works with them to get help them to get back on their feet, adapting humanitarian assistance to the needs, and tailoring responses to ensure gender sensitivity and inclusion.

Cash-Based Assistance

ADRA Norway believes in meeting the basic needs of affected populations in ways that maintain and respect their dignity. One of the pledges of the Grand Bargain was to increase the use of cash-based assistance. Cash-based assistance, whether through direct cash distribution or vouchers, is increasingly being used by ADRA and the humanitarian sector as a whole as the primary modality of emergency response to meet immediate needs of those affected by conflicts and disasters and gives greater flexibility and choice whilst supporting recovery of livelihoods and markets. Cash-based assistance offers an alternative or complement to traditional in-kind assistance, often meeting people's needs quicker than distribution of commodities. Market assessments provide a basis for decision making regarding the appropriateness and feasibility of cash-based assistance, ensuring adequate market access and availability of critical goods and services in the local markets for people affected by crises.

²¹ INEE (2018), *ibid*.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

It is a priority of ADRA Norway to ensure access to safe water, adequate sanitation and improved hygiene to reduce public health risks associated with poor water quality, sanitation and hygiene practices and maintain people's nutrition and health outcomes. Activities are tailored to the different needs within the communities, giving consideration to disability, sex and age of the persons accessing facilities and materials. ADRA responds according to the humanitarian needs and gaps by establishing or repairing water sources, testing and purifying water supplies, ensuring safe, accessible and sufficient latrines, handwashing facilities and waste disposal facilities and providing adequate personal sanitary and hygiene materials. This is accompanied by relevant hygiene messaging to reduce open defecation and ensure proper use of the water and sanitation facilities. This has become even more important in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, where WASH interventions are foundational to efforts to reduce the spread of the virus. ADRA is also upscaling WASH in Schools initiatives to enable children to return safely to school.

Shelter and settlements

Within the shelter sector, there is growing recognition that shelter and settlement responses not only provide physical dwellings but also stable foundations to rebuild lives and support a range of multi-sectoral outcomes, it is therefore important to ensure that crisis-affected people live in safe, dignified and appropriate shelter and settlements.²² Globally, ADRA has significant experience in shelter responses, post Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004, Haiti Earthquake of 2010, Nepal Earthquake of 2015 and numerous hurricane/cyclone and flooding responses over the years to name a few. ADRA Norway is committed to ensuring that the shelter needs of affected persons are addressed. ADRA's responses include provision of shelter kits for emergency shelters, support for transitional emergency shelters and semi-permanent shelters and support for permanent shelters. All shelter construction work incorporates principles of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and "build back better." DRR techniques include measures to raise plinth heights above flood levels, ensuring proper anchoring of structures, binding of roof frames and roofing materials and proper bracing of structures. Shelter and settlements initiatives also address foundational challenges associated with durable solutions, integration, land tenure, inclusion and protection. Cash-based assistance modalities are also used in shelter responses where possible and are market based and enhance ownership of affected populations.

Non-food items

The provision of non-food items either through in-kind support (provision of physical items) or through cash-based assistance modalities, ensures that communities have access to the basic items they need in order to survive. Although the items to be distributed will be decided from assessments of needs, gaps and available resources, different items may be provided depending upon family needs and size.²³ ADRA Norway works to ensure that the health, security, privacy, and dignity of affected populations is safeguarded throughout the distribution process, and that the support provided is tailored, factoring in gender and inclusion dimensions. It is a priority to ensure that distributions reduce and mitigate existing or potential GBV risks in emergencies.

Emergency Food security and livelihoods

Disasters and conflicts have a direct effect on the food security and livelihood situation of people. All responses need to be based on an understanding of how livelihood systems have been disrupted and should contribute towards helping communities to reengage in their livelihoods. Livelihoods can be disrupted by damages or disruption to infrastructure, productive assets, transportation networks, agriculture, overlaid on existing vulnerabilities, discrimination and protection issues within communities. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, the situation is changing very quickly (roads can be reopened, prices on markets can vary on a daily basis, the affected population could move from one location to another, etc.). ADRA Norway will address immediate needs through food assistance and cash based interventions and protect livelihoods through the provision of productive assets that align with existing skills, seeds, cash for work opportunities to rehabilitate agricultural infrastructure and cash based assistance to stimulate local markets and support local traders, particularly for the most vulnerable who do not have the capital or connections to withstand the shock. This will reduce negative coping mechanisms such as the sale of productive assets, increased debt,

²² Global Shelter Cluster, Shelter & Settlements Strategy (2018-2022), <https://www.sheltercluster.org/strategy>

²³ Distribution of Shelter Materials, NFI and CASH (2018)

https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/good_distribution_first_edition_web_1.pdf

sexual favours etc. The provision of food assistance will be prioritized in situations where food sources, food reserves or crops have been damaged and local markets don't have adequate supply of food items to enable balanced nutritional intake for the whole family.

Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience

ADRA Norway will also work to assist individuals and communities be better prepared for, withstand, and cope with the immediate aftermath of a disaster or other crises is vital in reducing the impact of such crises and avoiding loss of life and livelihoods. Crises are becoming increasingly recurring and protracted. The impact of disasters and the complexity of humanitarian crises is growing, as climate change results in more severe and frequent weather-related events, coupled with population growth, rapid urbanization, depleted eco-systems, and conflicts. While climate change has global repercussions, the most vulnerable communities will experience the greatest impacts. In the context of global climate change and the increased risk that is faced by vulnerable populations, ADRA Norway's programming will promote greater resilience of people and communities vulnerable to conflict and natural disasters, including forced migration and the impact of climate-related weather events.

In line with the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction (DRR) (2015-2030) calls for "enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction." ADRA Norway is committed to work with stakeholders at all levels using participatory approaches that are field-tested and evidence based. We primarily work through a community based disaster risk management (CBDRM) approach that reduces risk and vulnerabilities and involves local stakeholders and groups and through school based disaster risk management or school safety programming. Our priority is to address various forms of exclusion relating to gender, social (ethnic, caste, and religion), economic status, age, ability and geography that increase vulnerability, identify and mitigate disaster risks, promote resilience and climate adaption and ensure disaster preparedness. ADRA Norway will also make efforts to "green humanitarian response" and towards climate-sensitive "Build Back Greener" goals.

Humanitarian capacity and added value

ADRA Norway has consistently provided assistance to people in need in protracted, complex crises in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. This includes Education in Emergencies work in South Sudan and Nepal, support to South Sudanese and Congolese refugees in Uganda, response to the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh, the Syrian crisis in Lebanon and Syria and the Yemen crisis. ADRA Norway's humanitarian programs and support, has enabled the development of capabilities for strategic work and coordination and partnerships with local implementing partners with presence and insight into the context, enabling rapid, conflict sensitive and effective humanitarian responses.

ADRA Norway has two program agreements with Norad Civil Society department with strong humanitarian-development-peace nexus elements, intervening in fragile, conflict affected contexts of Africa and Asia. In the Sahel this includes education interventions in highly vulnerable areas of Timbuktu in Mali and Tillabery in Niger where the combination of poverty, organized crime, violent extremism and weak institutions is making the region increasingly insecure, unstable and conflict-ridden. In Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Myanmar, this includes provision of education opportunities to highly vulnerable and marginalized children in protracted crisis situations.

Technical engagement and Cluster coordination

ADRA Norway's particular value addition is in the education sector. ADRA Norway co-chairs the ADRA Network Education Technical Learning Lab (ETLL), has membership in the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) Norway, the Global Education Cluster advisory group and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) INGO advisory group. At the global level, ADRA, has membership in the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and has education technical experts in our team to support design and implementation of programs in the education sector. Additionally we have experience in implementing infrastructure work (school buildings, latrines, water sources and shelters) in conflict areas, doing cash based programming and protection work.

ADRA network partnerships

ADRA Norway is part of a global ADRA Network, which is present in more than 125 countries, enabling quick mobilization of humanitarian responses in almost any country or context as humanitarian crises emerge. ADRA Norway works within the ADRA Emergency Response Management System (ERMS) for overall emergency response planning, training and response, and as such has staff who are members of the Emergency Response Team (ERT), a roster of trained and experienced people who are deployed along with other ADRA professionals with diverse expertise enabling rapid surge capacity for an effective response. As a member of the ADRA Europe Humanitarian Task Force that brings together humanitarian practitioners from European ADRA support offices, ADRA Norway engages in work to improve coordination, collaboration and technical cooperation for capacity building, knowledge sharing, resource mobilization and joint programming.

ADRA Norway plans and implements all humanitarian responses with local ADRA partners. This model ensures local ownership, relevance, cost-effectiveness and quality. ADRA partners are locally registered, governed by local boards and headed by country directors that report to their respective boards. They are strongly embedded in local communities through their connection with churches and communities. These are natural partnerships that leverage the ADRA Network capacities and strengths and are based on common overarching organizational systems and philosophy. Through the ADRA network licensing and accreditation systems, partners have been vetted and meet necessary standards for partnership. As a full member of the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) Alliance, the CHS standards are incorporated and are sufficiently documented through the ADRA global network's ADRA Accreditation and Licensing (AAL) system criterion 10, which enables verification of the standards. The AAL process ensures minimum standards for systems and policies for ADRA Norway and implementing partners. Strategic partnerships are also possible across the ADRA network to draw on technical expertise and allow for cross learning. Through these partnerships with ADRA offices, ADRA Norway promotes partnerships with local civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs.

Funding model

ADRA Norway primarily works bilaterally with partners with external funding from donors such as Norad/MFA, ECHO, UN agencies and ECW. In order to establish a presence on the ground, the ADRA Network is mobilized and pools international private funding to ensure a rapid response is initiated while assessments are undertaken and funding proposals developed. ADRA Norway frequently provides co-financing support through partnerships with other ADRA offices to leverage additional funding. A priority going forwards will also be to identify other sources of funding for our humanitarian response work such as foundations and private companies and to increase access to humanitarian funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ECHO.

Geographical priorities

ADRA Norway is prioritizing countries and regions where we have existing programming, capacity, experience and reliable partnerships on the ground and where needs are greatest.

Greater Horn of Africa escalating crises

In South Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia ADRA Norway has a strong program with both humanitarian and nexus programs. In a context of increasing food insecurity, epidemics, conflict and insecurity in these countries, we will pursue further humanitarian programming with our ADRA offices in these countries.

In Sudan, a deepening economic crisis has significantly increased food insecurity and weakened essential services, including health, water and education. The new civilian authorities need more international support. ADRA Norway has a history of work in Sudan and in 2020 resumed work in Sudan through programming in West Darfur on Education and Gender. The situation in West Darfur is further deteriorating at the beginning of 2021 resulting in increasing numbers of IDPs and humanitarian need.

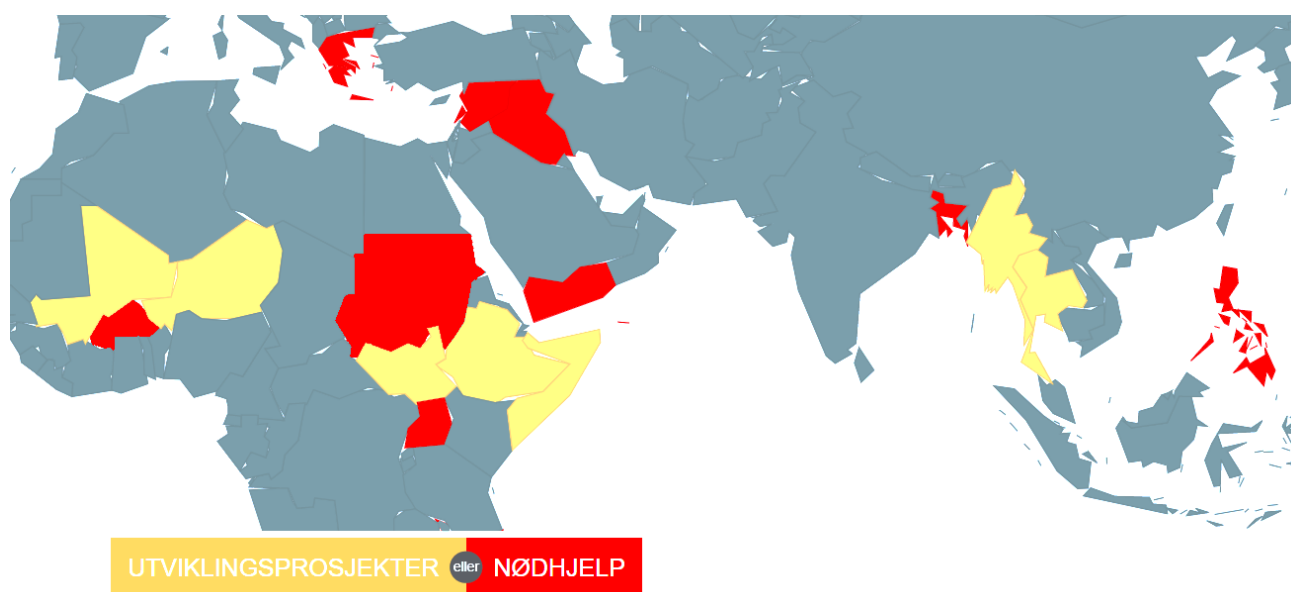
In Ethiopia ongoing conflict, desert locust invasion, recurrent climatic shocks such as floods and droughts, and socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 are the key drivers of humanitarian needs. Of an estimated 2.7 million people currently internally displaced in Ethiopia, 1 million of which occurred in 2020. The ongoing insecurity

both in and beyond Tigray will continue to severely undermine the availability and access to food and other basic goods and services and there are concerns that the situation will get worse in 2021 and beyond.

In Uganda, ADRA Norway is supporting South Sudanese and Congolese refugees and will continue to work on expanding those programs.

Sahel Region

The Sahel region is facing an unprecedented security and humanitarian crisis, an epicenter of conflict, climate change, weak governance, chronic underdevelopment and poverty and the pandemic. The number of IDPs increased more than fourfold in 2020 to 1.5 million.²⁴ Hunger has reached critical levels, the humanitarian crisis shows no signs of abating as it enters its seventh year. The priority countries here for ADRA Norway are Mali and Niger where we have presence.



Yemen war and famine

Yemen is the world's worst humanitarian crisis, and the number of people in need is expected to remain close to 2019 levels of 24 million, almost 80 per cent of the population. The humanitarian response in Yemen is also the world's largest, despite huge challenges. ADRA Norway has historically done a lot of work in Yemen and more recently has been providing support through ADRA network partnerships and will continue to seek funding for expanding programs in Yemen.

Syria conflict

While the conflict in Syria continues to drive the world's largest refugee crisis, with 5.6 million refugees in the region and 6.7 million internally displaced. Millions of people in overcrowded settlements are coping with inadequate shelter and a lack of basic services. Basic food items are now out of reach for many, and the number of food-insecure people increased from 9.3 million to 12.4 million people. ADRA Norway is contributing towards humanitarian support in partnership with the ADRA Network and looks to expand our response to the Syrian crisis.

Conflict and displacement in Myanmar, Thailand and Bangladesh

ADRA Norway has supported Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar since the beginning of the crisis and will continue to prioritize Bangladesh and the Rohingya response in our humanitarian strategy. Ethnic conflicts in Myanmar continue, with significant escalations also observed at the beginning of 2021 in Karen areas, while 2021 also is seeing a major political crisis as the Myanmar Military grabbed power leading to mass protests across the country. The situation for refugees in Thailand has also become increasingly uncertain as a result.

²⁴ Global Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021 February update.