



**2022 Edition**

---

# **THE STATE OF THE HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM**

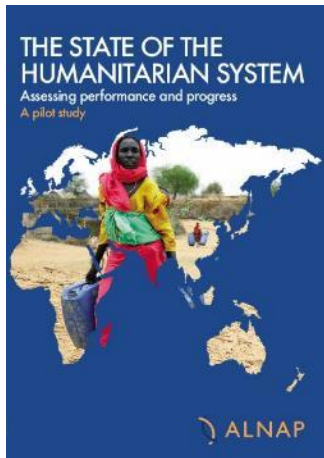
---

**WFP Executive Board |  
31 October 2022**

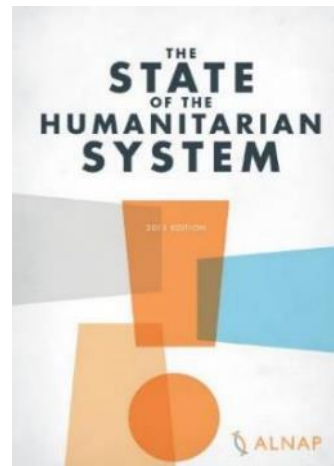


# 15 years of monitoring performance

The longest running evidence base on the performance of international humanitarian action



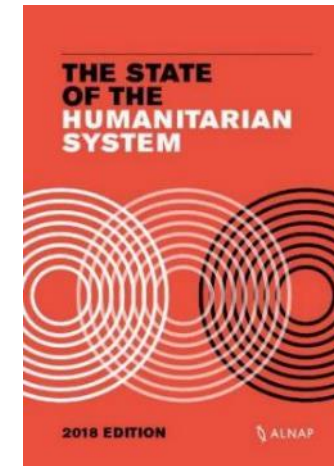
2007-2009



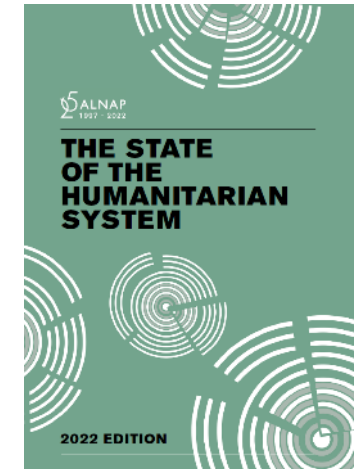
2010-2011



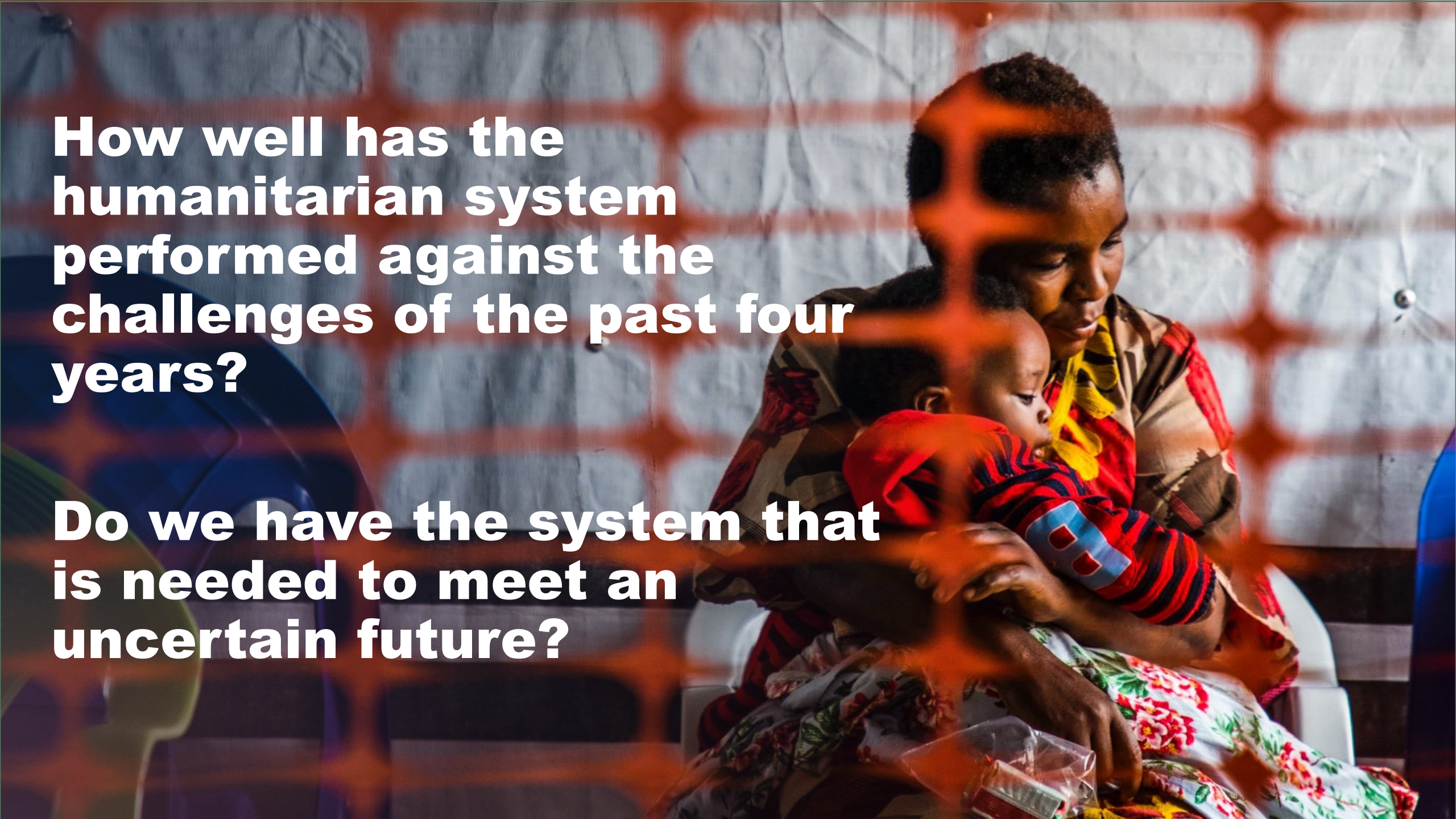
2012-2014



2015-2017



2018-2021

A woman with short dark hair is sitting and holding a baby. She is wearing a patterned top. The baby is wearing a red and black striped shirt. They are in a room with a wall that has a grid pattern of white and brown squares. The lighting is warm and slightly dim. There are some colorful objects in the foreground, possibly toys, but they are out of focus.

**How well has the humanitarian system performed against the challenges of the past four years?**

**Do we have the system that is needed to meet an uncertain future?**

**1**

**The demand  
for  
humanitarian  
action:  
crises,  
caseload &  
context**

**2**

**The size and  
capacity of  
the  
humanitarian  
system**

**3**

**Performance  
of the system**

**4**

**Change and  
contestation**

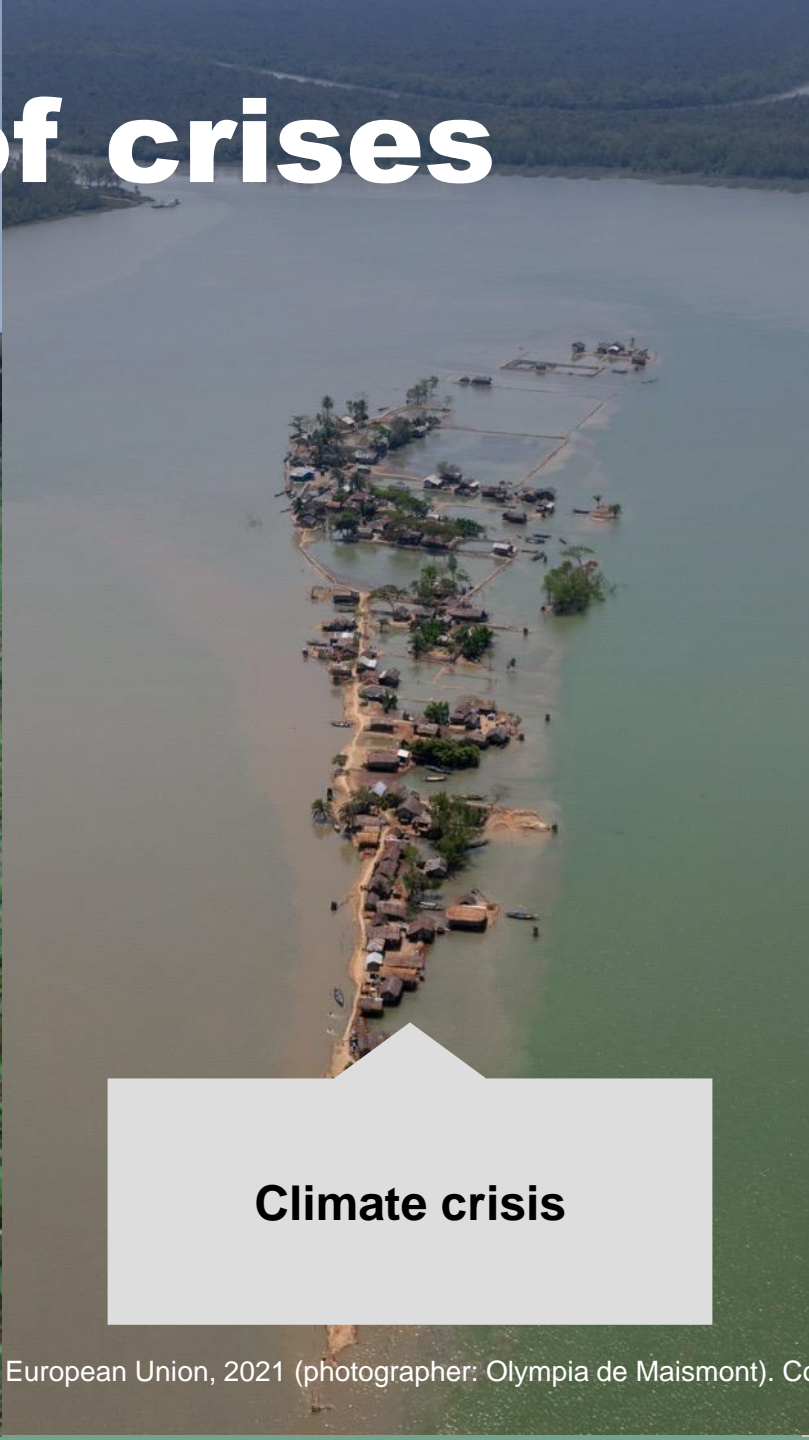


# **The demand for humanitarian action: Crises, caseload & context**

# Four years of crises



**Ongoing conflicts**

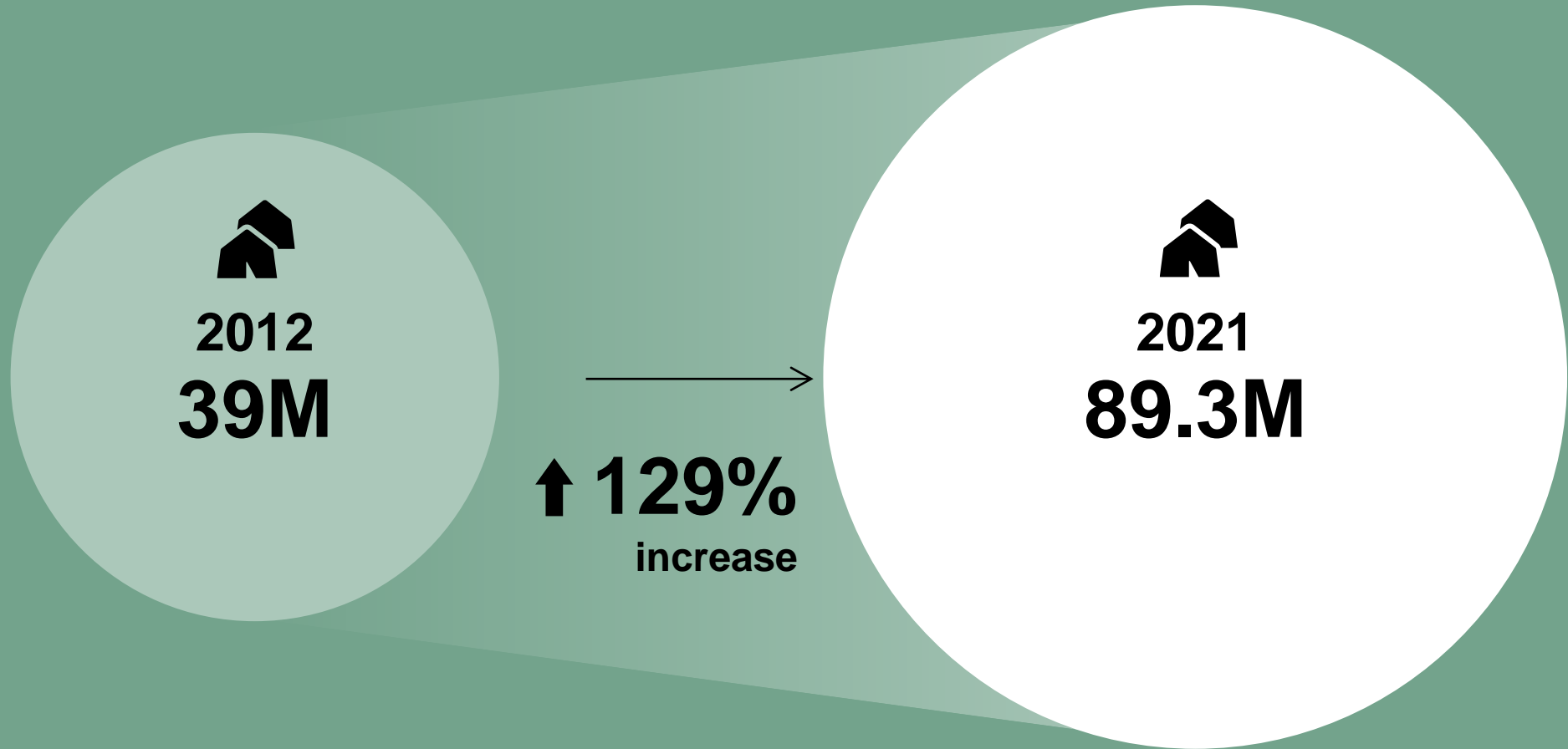


**Climate crisis**

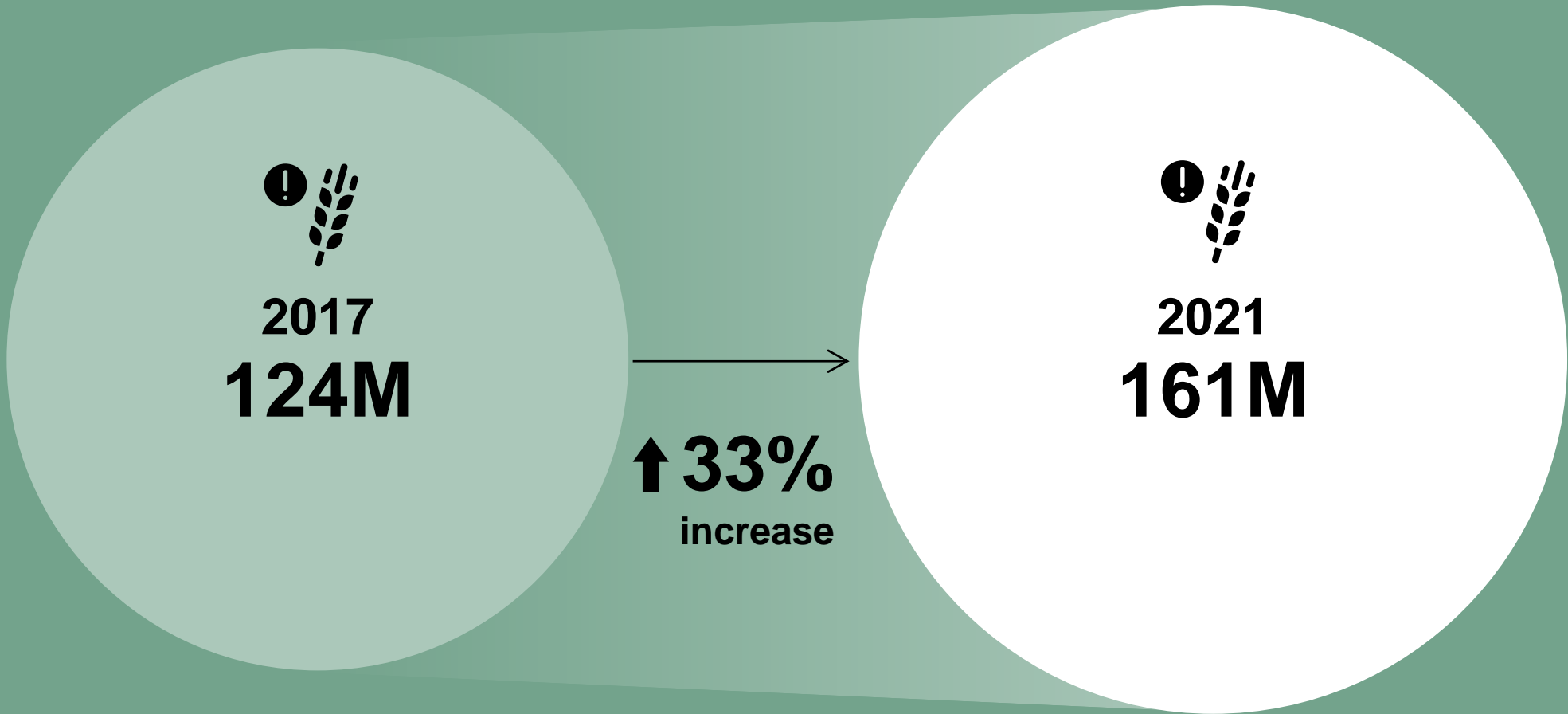


**COVID-19**

# Displacement more than doubled



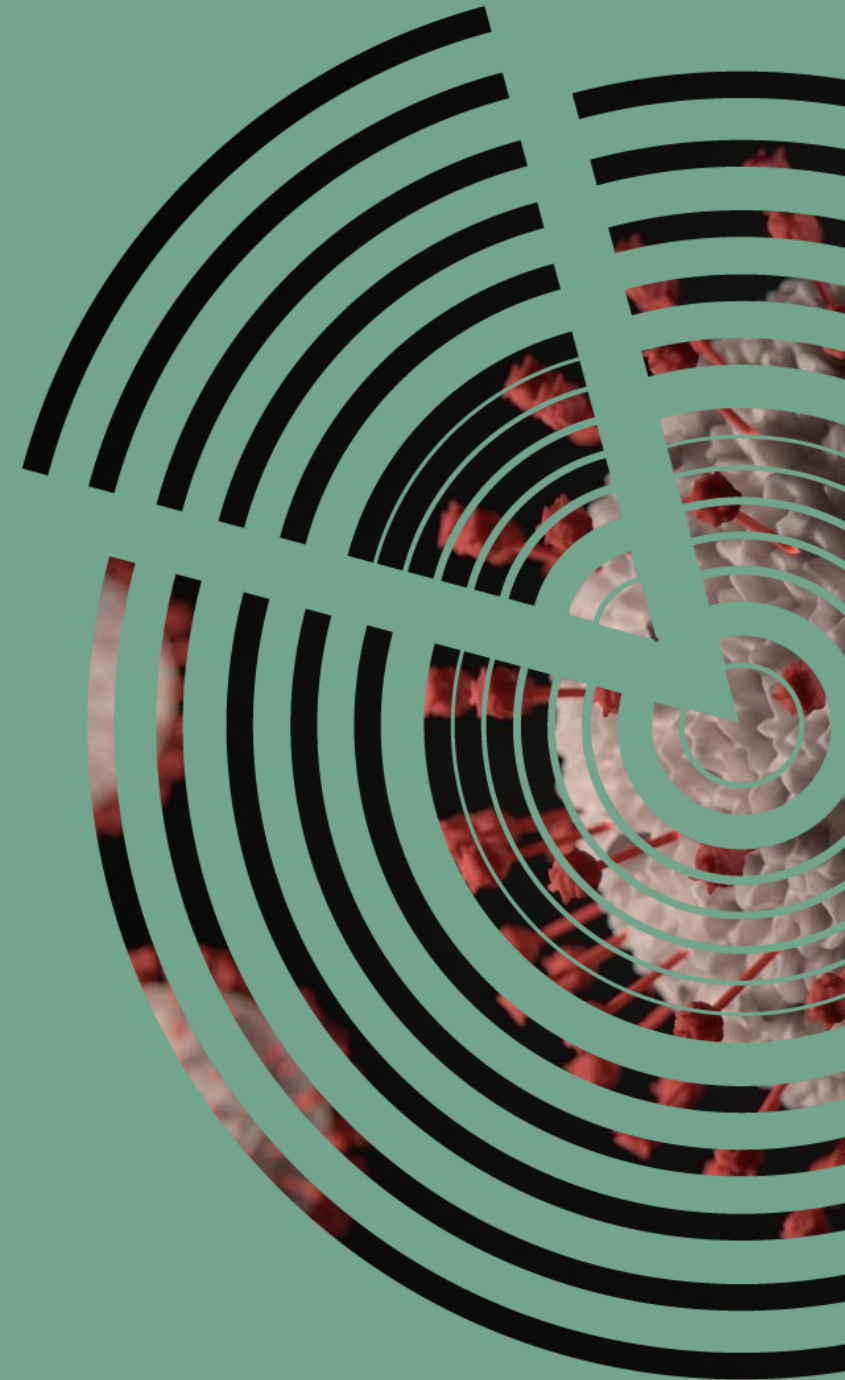
# Acute food insecurity has risen



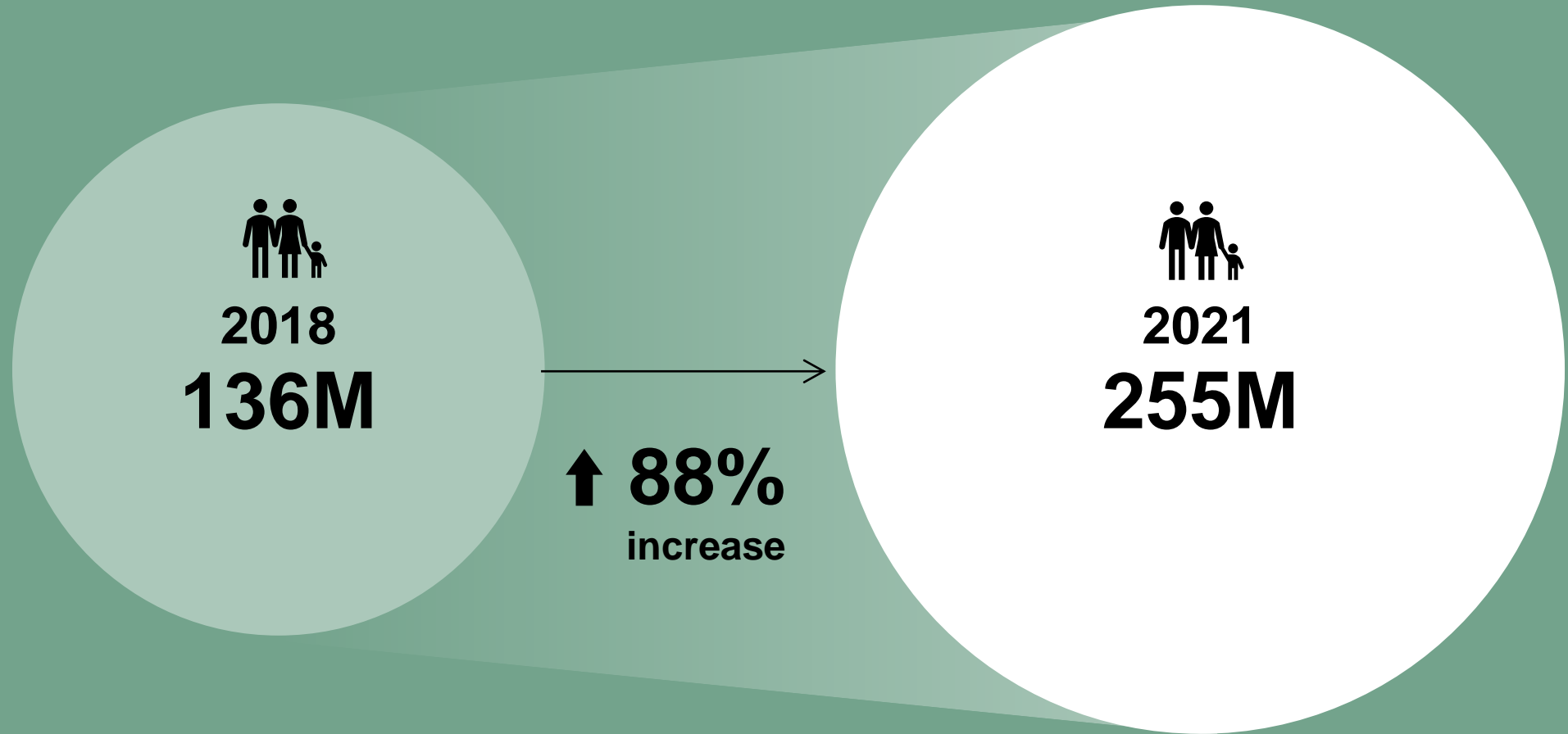


# COVID-19

- Impacts of lockdowns/restrictions more severe than the virus
- Sharp increase in protection risks and education needs
- 97 million estimated to have been pushed below extreme poverty line



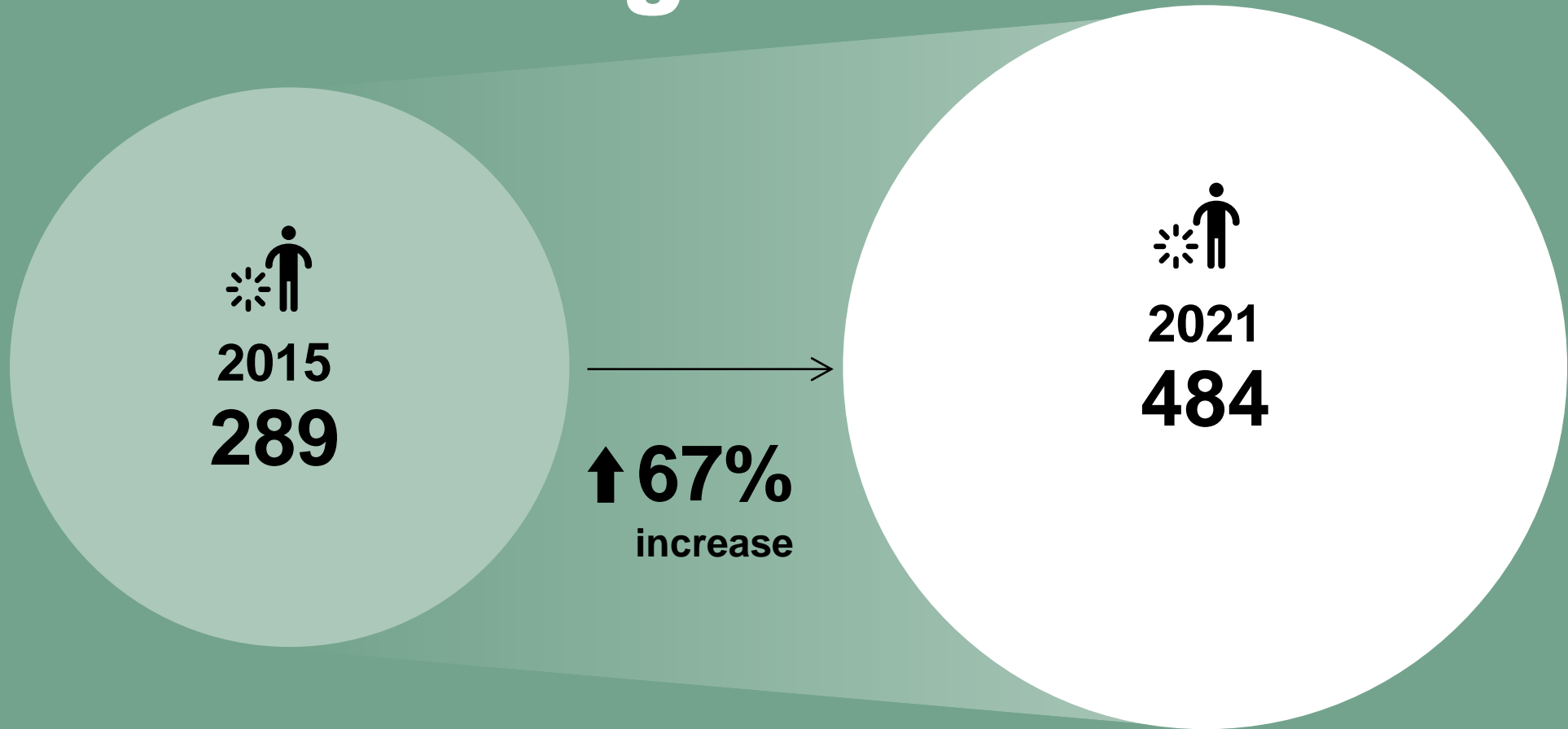
# More people in need



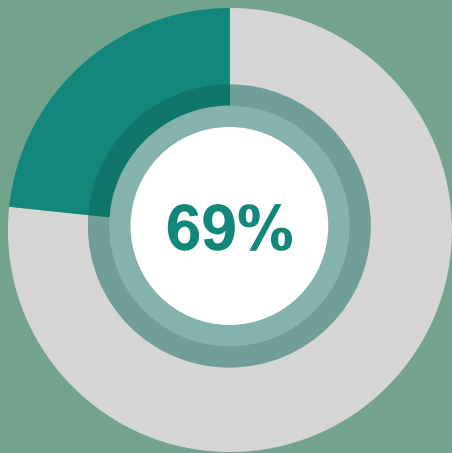
A photograph of a war-torn city street. The buildings are heavily damaged, with exposed concrete and missing windows. Debris is scattered on the ground. Two people are walking away from the camera down the street. The text "As humanitarian caseloads grew, the enabling space to address them shrank" is overlaid on the image.

**As humanitarian caseloads  
grew, the enabling space to  
address them shrank**

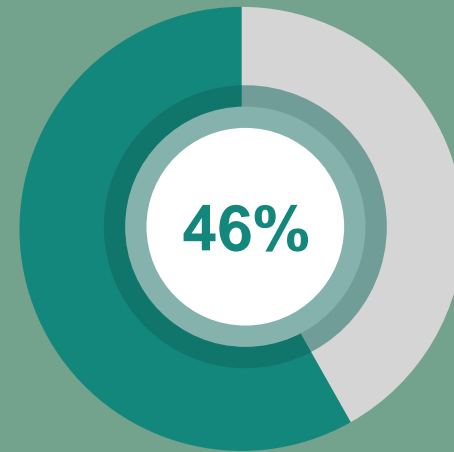
# Number of aid workers being attacked is rising



**In 2021 the system reached an estimated 106 million people, equivalent to:**




**% of those targeted for assistance**



**% of those estimated to be in need of assistance**





**“We’re in an  
absolute crisis  
of a fight for  
core norms”**



# **The size and capacity of the humanitarian system**

# What is the system?



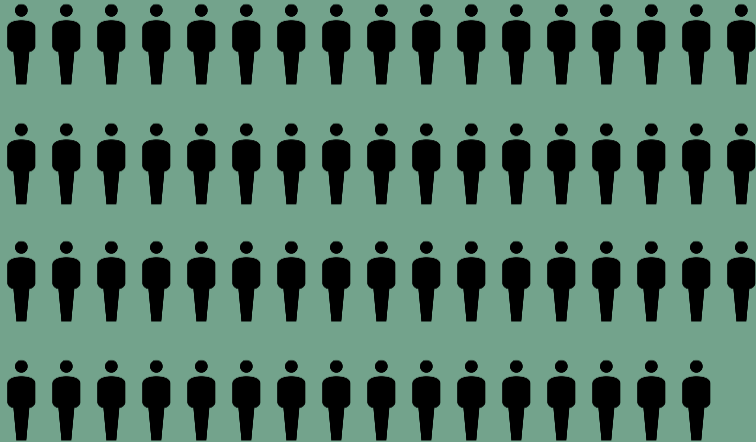


# There are more staff...



2012

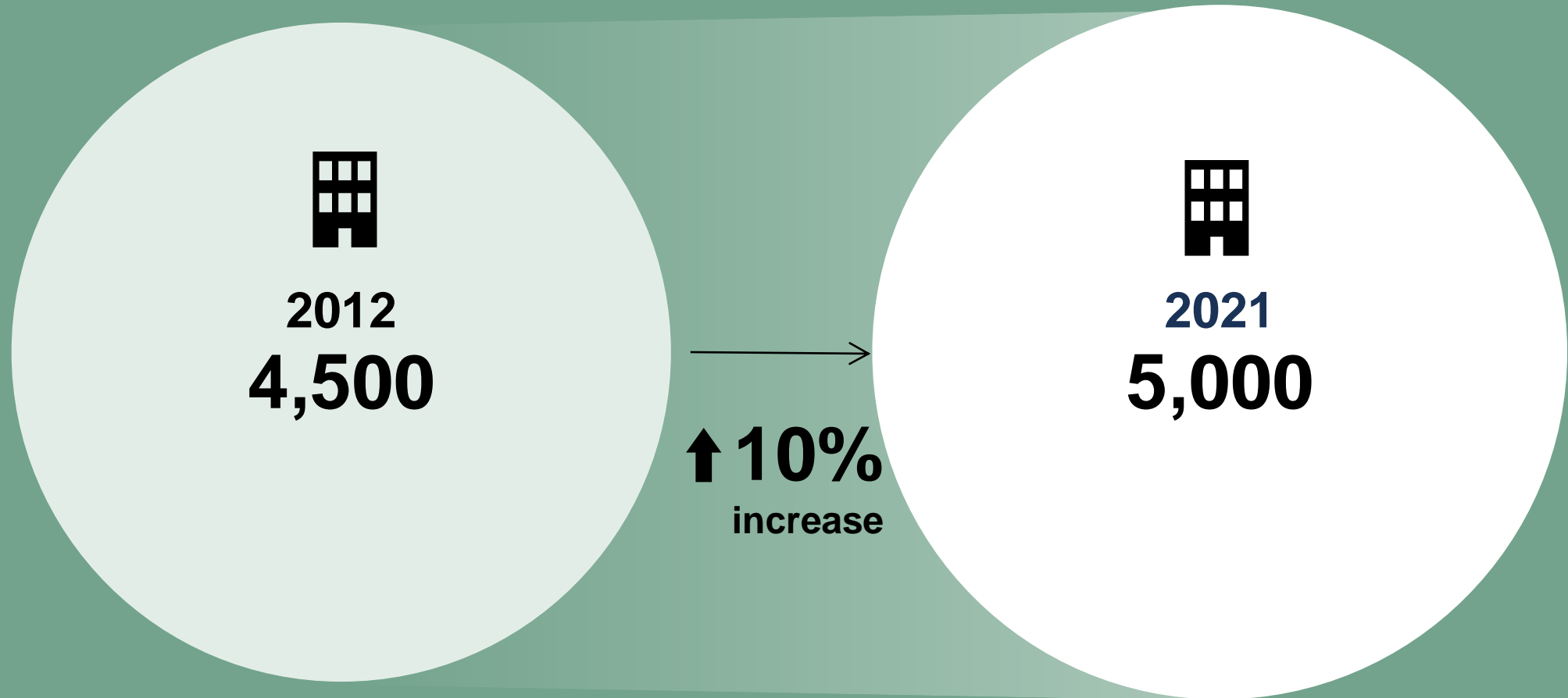
324,000



2021

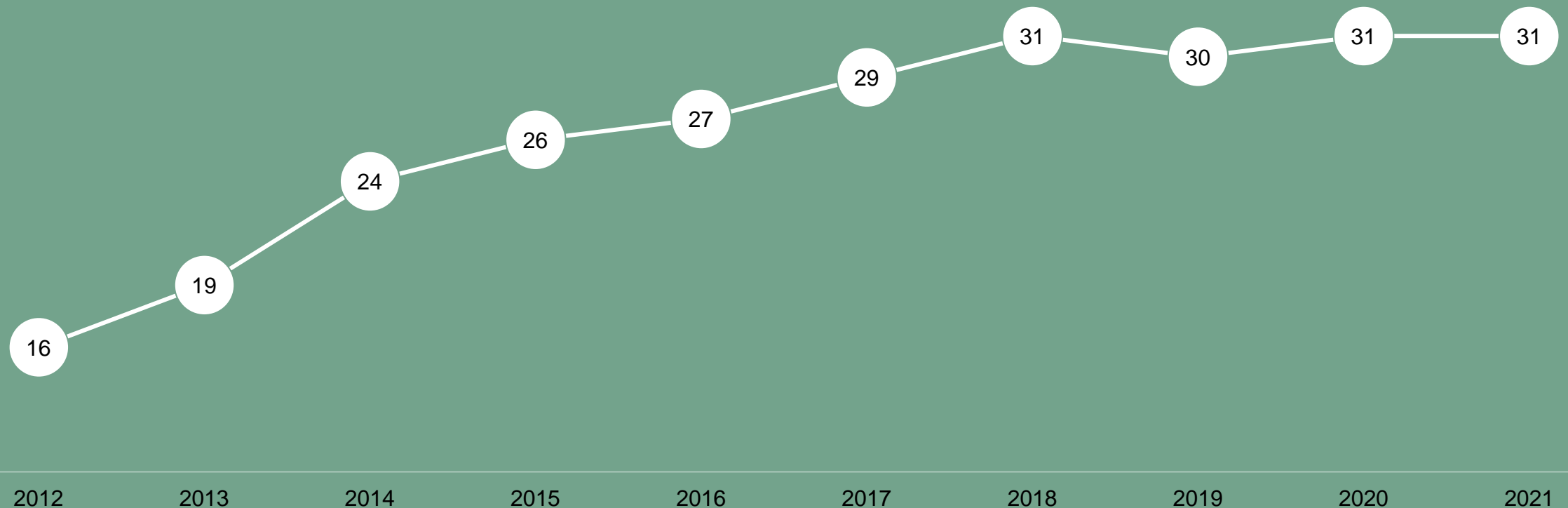
632,000

# ...working for more organisations



# Funding doubled over a decade

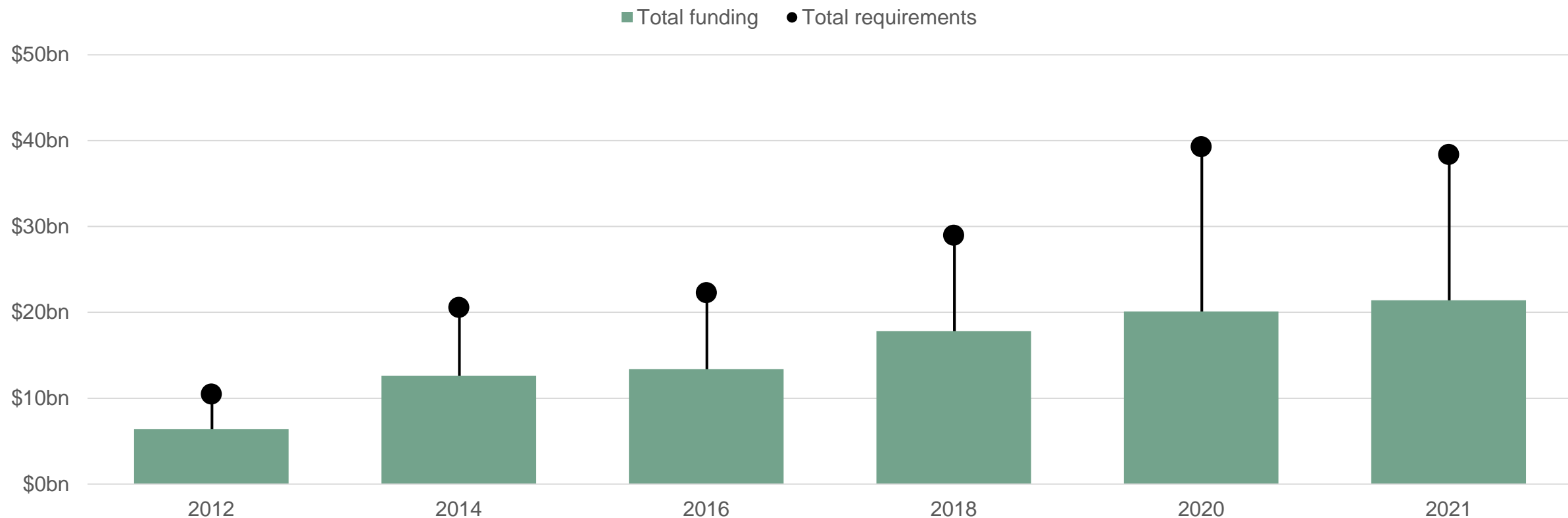
International humanitarian assistance (in \$billion)



Source: Development Initiatives (DI) based on Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service, UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and DI's unique dataset for private contributions.

# ... but funding didn't keep pace with requirements

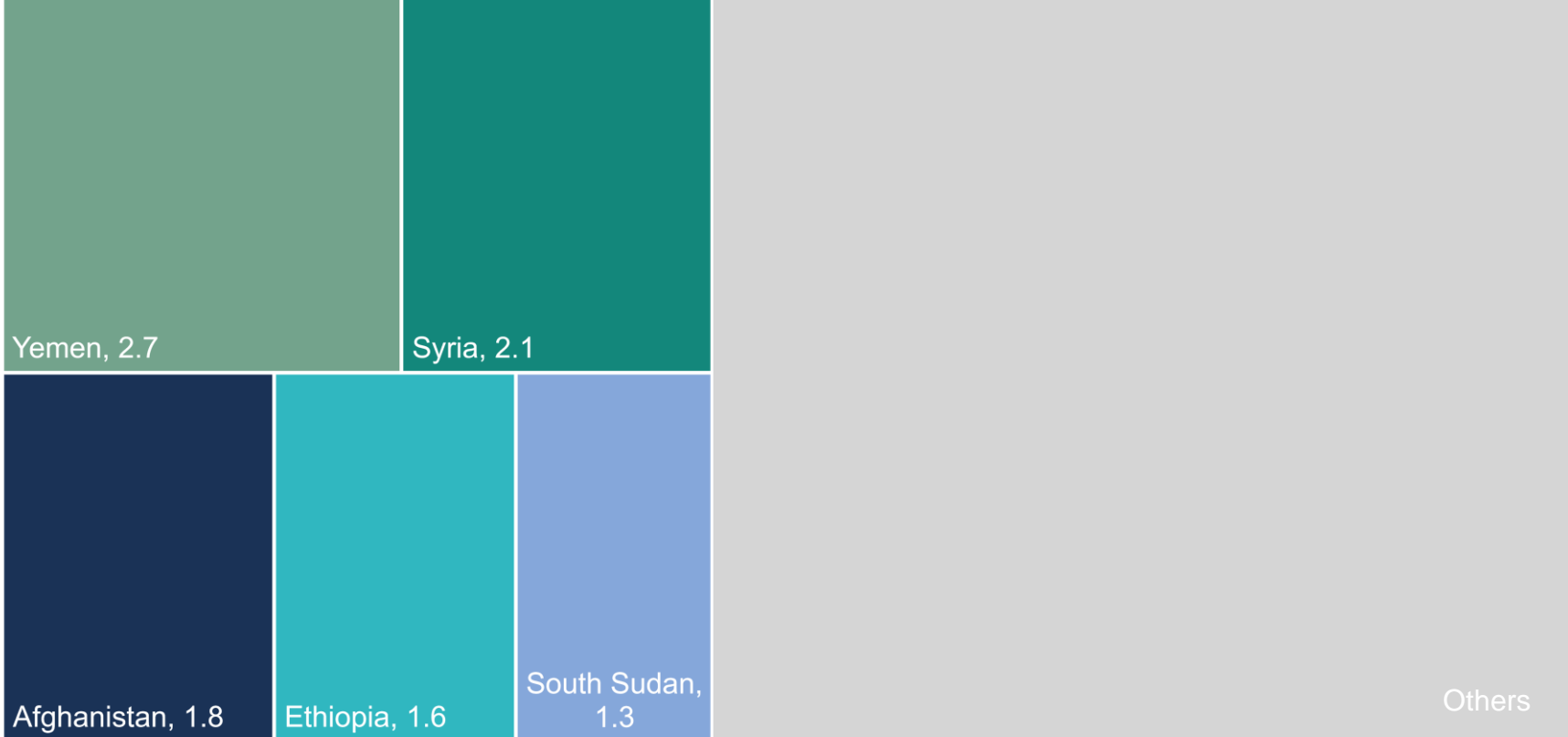
Funding and unmet requirements, UN-coordinated appeals, 2012–2021



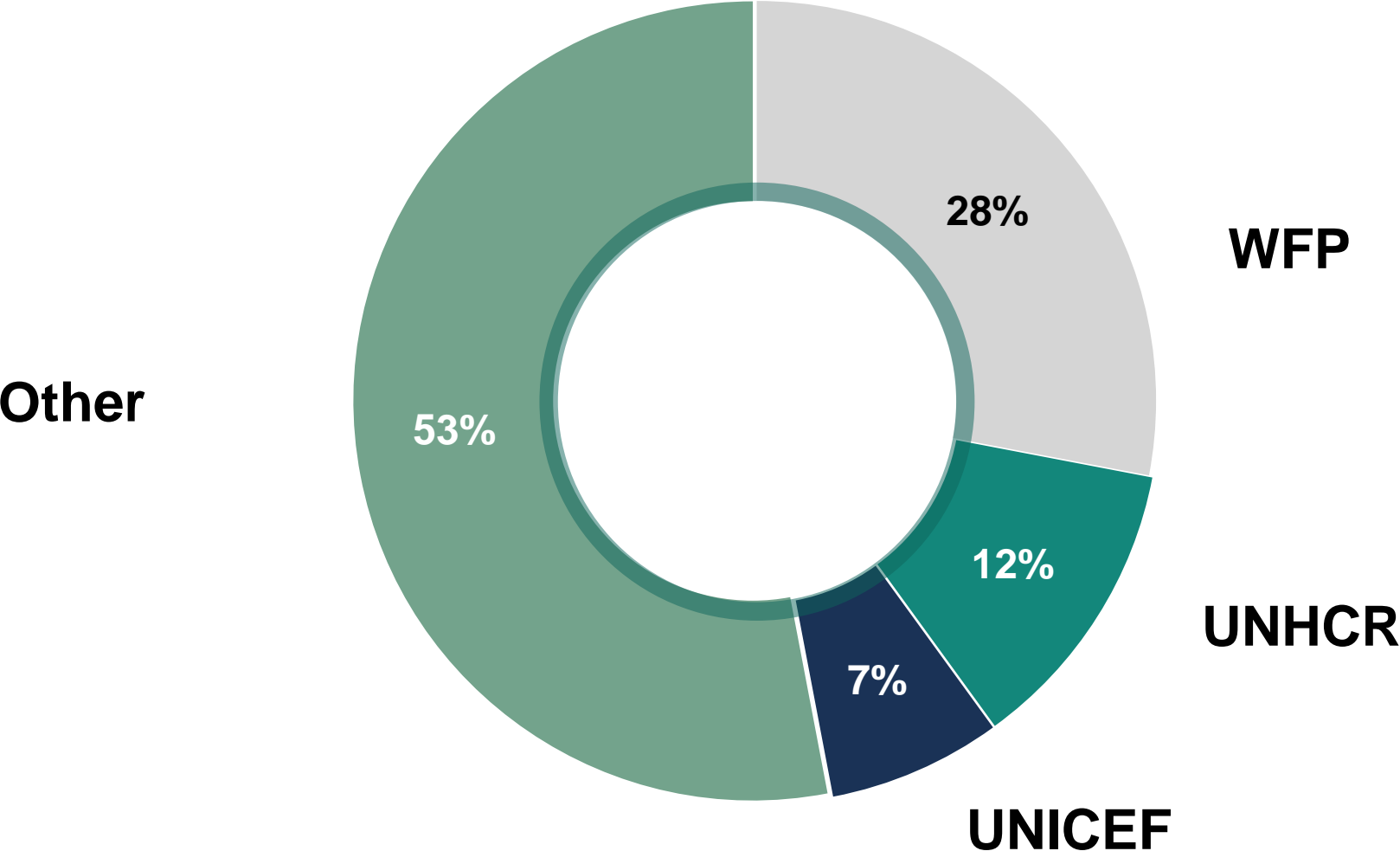
# Concentration to a handful of countries

Around 40% of aid went to just five countries

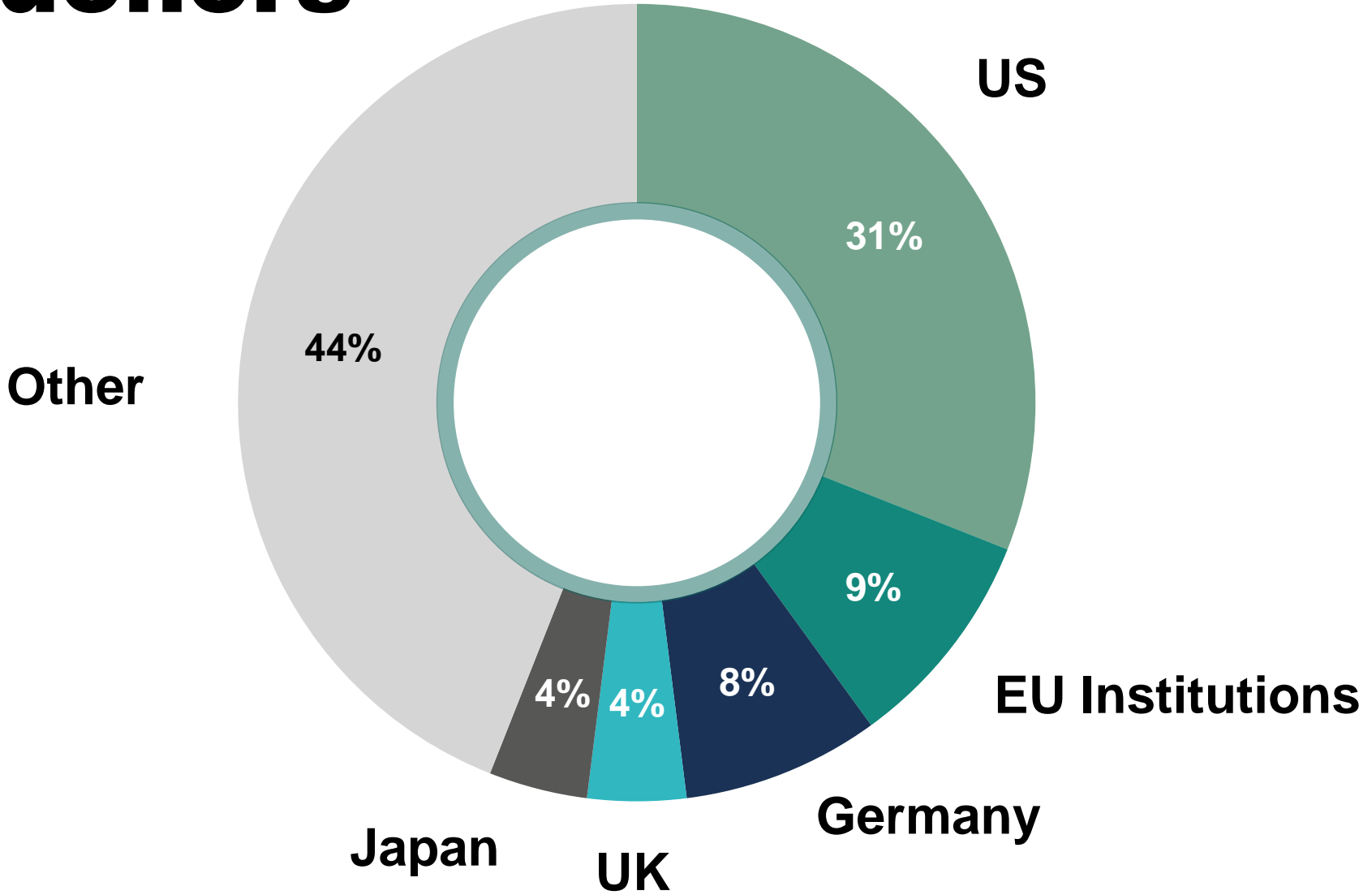
Amount in USD (bn)



# 47% of funding over 2018-2021 went directly to 3 agencies



# In 2021, 57% of funding provided by top 5 donors





Affected communities

Donors

Government agencies

Governments

Humanitarian arms of intergov. organisations

Nat'l Disaster Mgmt

International NGOs

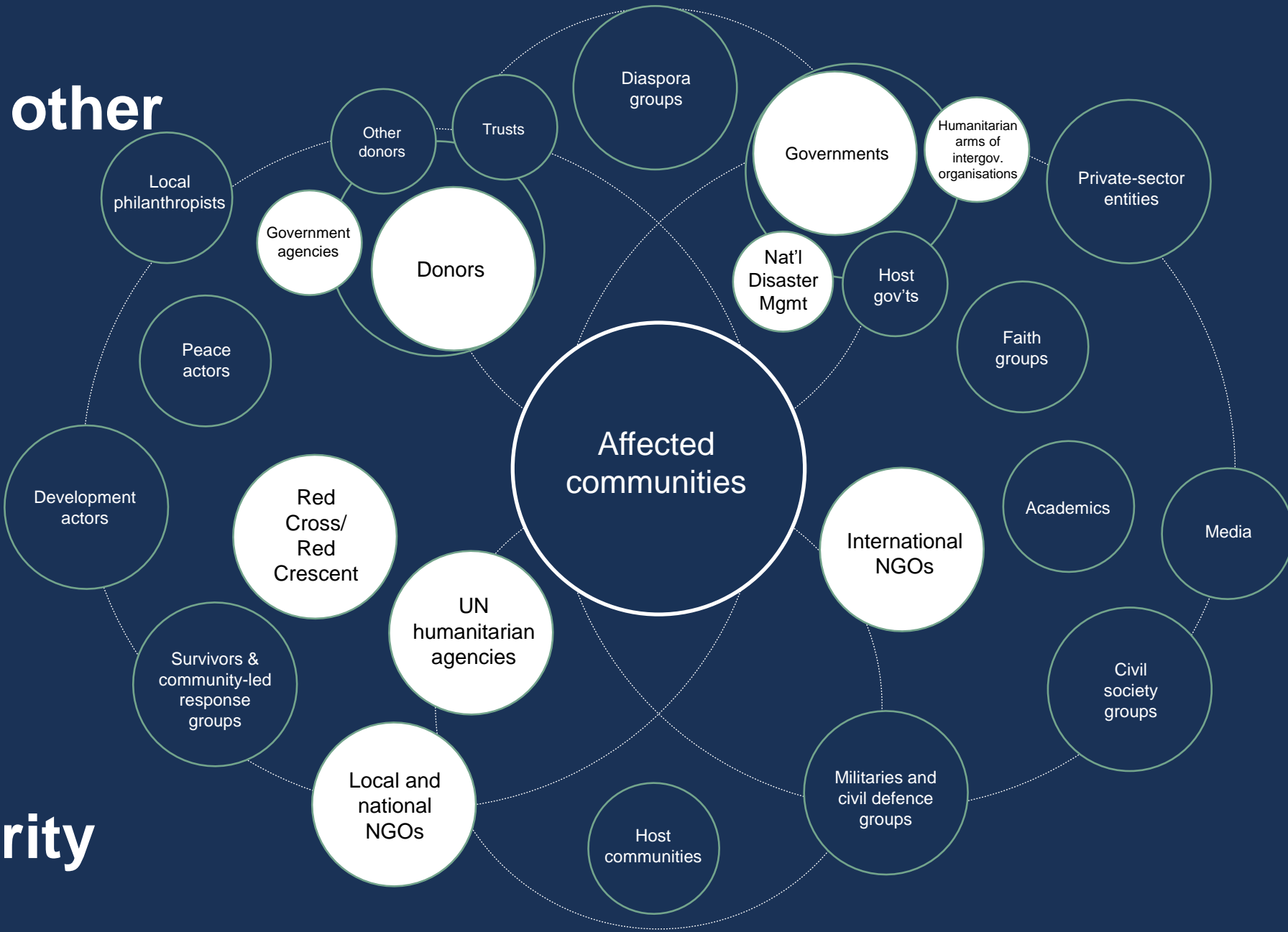
UN humanitarian agencies

Local and national NGOs

Red Cross/ Red Crescent



**Growing awareness of other sources of support...**



**...but little complementarity**

# Section 2: Summary

- **The system is bigger than ever before, but not at the capacity required to address rising caseload**
- **Different countries/crises fare very differently in terms of support they receive**
- **Funding base still in need of diversification**
- **Outreach is improving, but has not meaningfully shifted how the system connects with other sources of support to people in crisis**

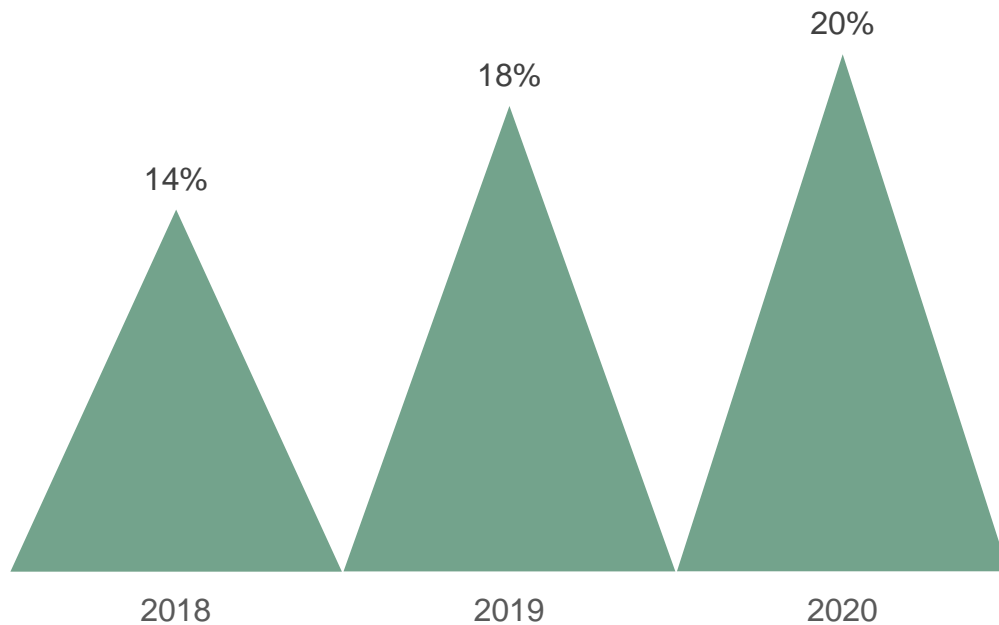




**The  
performance of  
the system**

# Cash: effective and growing

Proportion of funding for humanitarian cash and voucher assistance out of total IHA, 2018-2021



## Positive outcomes



Improved educational outcomes



Improved food security & diet diversity



Increased feelings of dignity



Lower morbidity for children under five



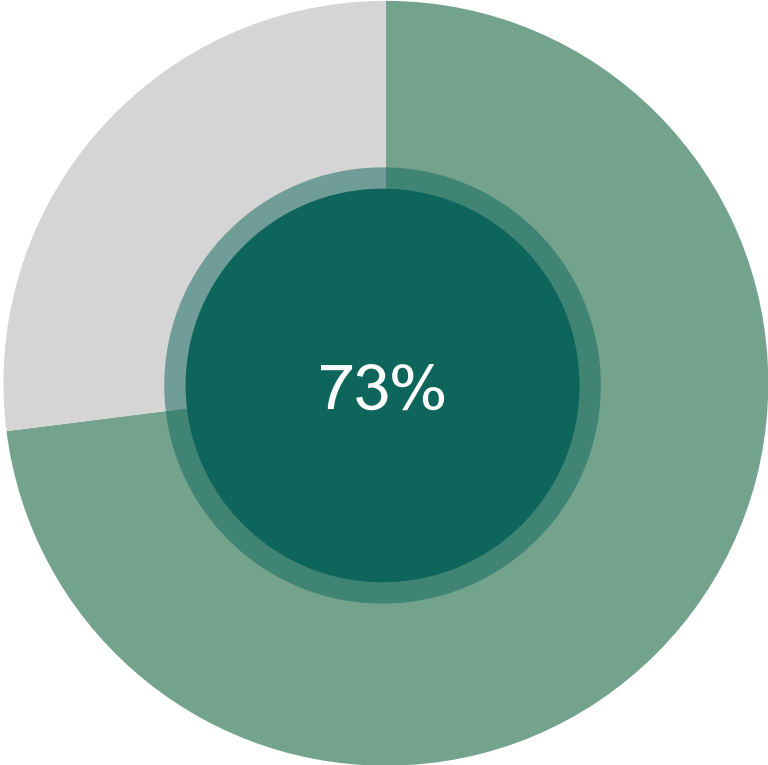
Decline in child labour & early marriage

A white medical helicopter is shown in flight against a clear blue sky. The helicopter is viewed from a low angle, looking up. It has a white body with blue and red accents. The word 'EMERGENCY' is visible on the side of the fuselage. The main rotor blades are blurred, indicating motion. The landing gear is visible, and the helicopter appears to be in a steady climb or hover.

**Preparedness and  
anticipatory action  
improved the timeliness  
of humanitarian aid**

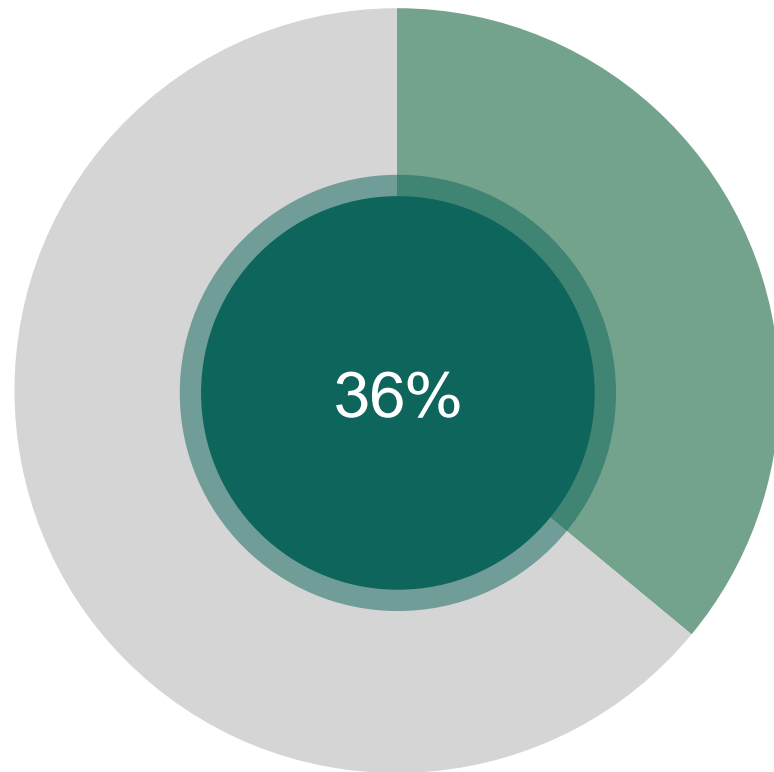
Source: ©EU/ECHO/Daniel Dickinson.

# How well did the system treat affected people?



**73% of aid recipients said they were treated with respect and dignity**

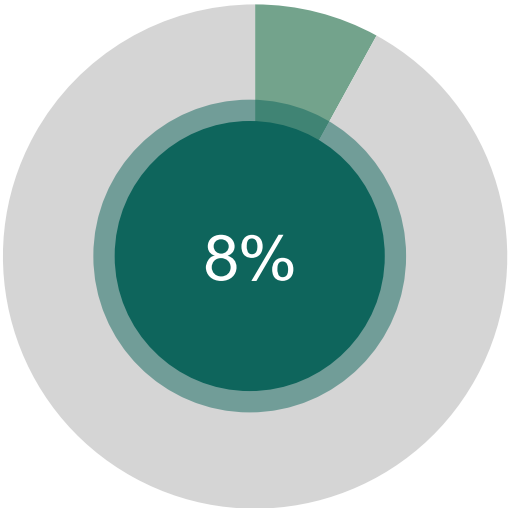
# What affected people want to know: does aid go to the right people?



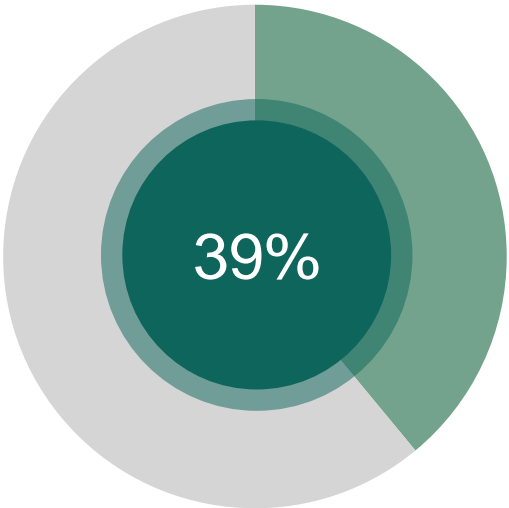
**Only 36% of recipients said aid went to those who needed it most.**

# Shrinking space has real impact on people in crisis

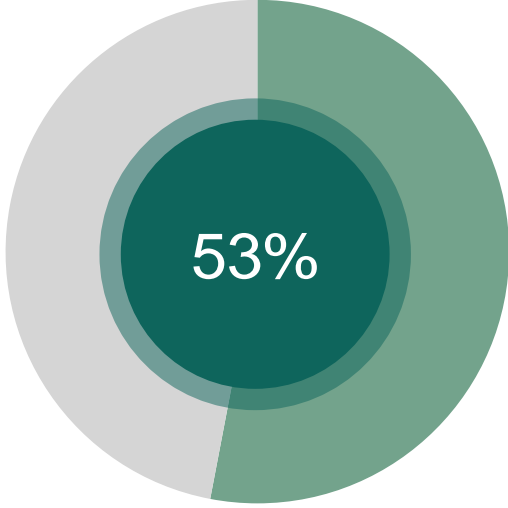
Were you satisfied with the amount of aid you received?



Tigray



Oromia region



Somali region



# **New and old targeting challenges**

- **Confusion about criteria**
- **Different ideas of fairness**
- **Interference and diversion**
- **Applying gender, age, disability guidelines**



# Engagement leads to better performance

Survey respondents consulted about the aid they were receiving were:

**2.2**

**times**

more likely to say that aid addressed their priority needs

**2.5**

**times**

more likely to say that the amount of aid was sufficient

**2.7**

**times**

more likely to say that the aid they received was of good quality

# **COVID slowed engagement progress**

**Only one in three  
aid recipients said they  
could provide feedback or complain...**

**... the same as in 2018**



# **& protracted nature of crises is impacting relevance**

**34% of aid recipients said aid addressed their priority needs...**

**... Slightly less than 2018 (39%)**





# **Change and contestation**

# **A step change in nexus thinking**

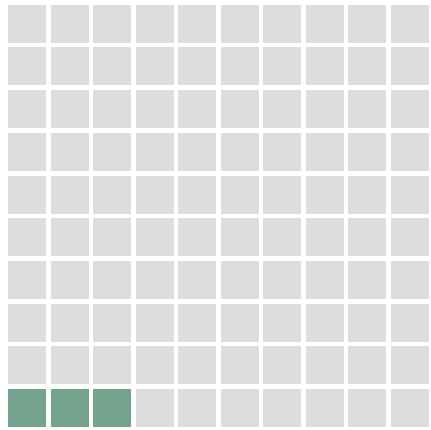
**People in protracted crises said aid didn't give long-term solutions**

**Multiple initiatives after 'triple nexus' recommendation**

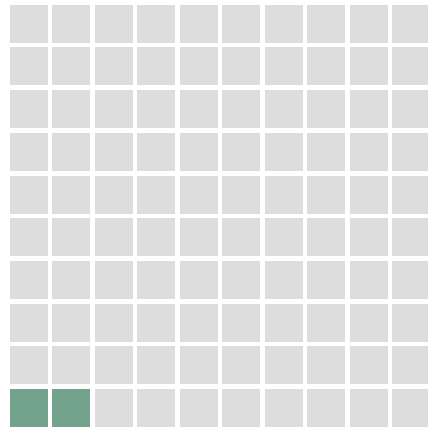
**But three quarters of practitioners said nexus progress was only 'fair' or 'poor'.**



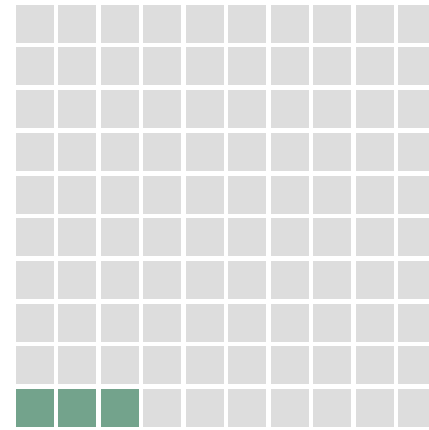
# Direct international humanitarian funding to national and local actors, 2018–2021



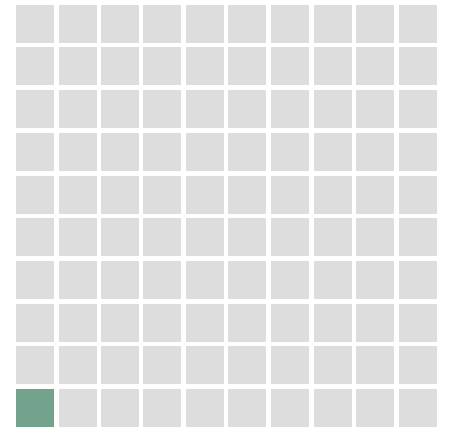
**3.3%**  
**2018**



**1.8%**  
**2019**



**3%**  
**2020**



**1.2%**  
**2021**



**Taking stock**



# What have we learned?

**In sum, the system:**

- **Is larger but not in proportion to the size of the problem**
- **Is effective but narrowly so**
- **Affected people still not at the centre**
- **Is evolving, but slowly**
- **Is under direct threat**





# **Reaffirming solidarity with people affected by crisis:**

- assertive about the humanitarian imperative
  - ambitious for affected people
  - humble about the system's role
- 