

MOPAN INSIGHTS

Multilateral Effectiveness in Humanitarian Crises

Output 1: Responding Under Pressure:
Lessons from MOPAN Assessments on
Organisational Adaptation to Reform
and Funding Constraints



Acknowledgements

This output was prepared under the overall strategic guidance of Suzanne Steensen, Head of the MOPAN Secretariat. The study was conducted under the supervision of Patrick Saez, Senior Policy Advisor and Head of Unit for Insights and authored by Cecilia Corsini, Junior Policy Analyst, who led the data collection and analysis, with the support of Paolo Zurlo, Intern.

We extend our sincere thanks to the members of the MOPAN Advisory Group for Multilateral Effectiveness in Humanitarian Crises. In the group, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom championed the work on behalf of MOPAN members and were represented by Marie-Louise Koch Wegter, Director for the Department for Humanitarian Affairs and Civil Society in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Denmark), supported by Thomas Thomsen, Chief Adviser; Xhulia Tepshi, Desk Officer, Federal Foreign Office (Germany); Sofia Karlsson, Deputy Director and Head of the Humanitarian Division, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Sweden); Dominik Stillhart, Deputy Director General and Head of the Humanitarian Aid and Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (Switzerland), supported by Mélanie Buesch, Programme Manager, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs; and Laurence West, Humanitarian Adviser, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (United Kingdom).

Acting in their personal capacity, Abdihakim Ainte, Director of Food Security and Climate Change in the Office of the Prime Minister (Somalia); Jeremy Konyndyk, President, Refugees International; Puji Pujiono, President of the Indonesian Social Workers Association and National Advisor of the National Agency for Disaster Management (Indonesia); Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency; Sofie Garde Thomle, Head, Inter-Agency Standing Committee Secretariat, also participated in the group.

We gratefully acknowledge the valuable contributions of Lewis Sida and Lynn Hastings, who, as independent experts, provided external peer review for this brief.

Finally, MOPAN is grateful to all Steering Committee representatives and member countries for their financial contributions, which made this brief possible.

This report is published under the responsibility of the Multilateral Performance Network (MOPAN). MOPAN is an independent body that is governed by a Steering Committee composed of representatives of all of its members and served by a permanent Secretariat. The Secretariat is hosted at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and bound by its administrative rules and procedures and is independent in terms of financing and the content and implementation of its work programme.

This document, as well as any data and any map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

Please cite this publication as:

Multilateral Performance Network (MOPAN) 2026, *Multilateral Effectiveness in Humanitarian Crises - Output 1: Responding Under Pressure: Lessons from MOPAN Assessments on Organisational Adaptation to Reform and Funding Constraints*, Paris

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	3
Abbreviations and acronyms.....	5
Executive summary	6
1. Introduction.....	12
Introduction	13
1.1 Scope, objectives, and limitations	14
1.2 About MOPAN Assessments	15
2. Context: Then and now	16
2.1 2025: A watershed year for the humanitarian system	17
2.2 Reform demands and resource constraints before 2025	18
3. Adaptations at the organisational level	19
3.1 Prioritisation	20
3.2 Organisational restructuring, decentralisation and downsizing	21
3.3 Innovation in operational management and business processes	22
3.4 Safeguarding from risks and maintaining trust	23
4. Adaptations at the programme level	25
4.1 Innovation in programming and delivery modalities	26
4.2 Localisation	27
4.3 Accountability to people affected by crisis (AAP).....	29
5. Adaptation through partnerships and collaboration	30
5.1 Shared services, integrated global supply chains, and procurement coordinationw.....	31
5.2 Advancing the HDP Nexus	32
5.3 The role of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)	33
6. Enablers and incentives	36
7. Conclusions	38
7.1 Adaptation by design	39
7.2 Adaptation by attrition	40
7.3 Considerations for the Humanitarian Reset.....	41
7.4 Looking ahead: Next steps for the MOPAN Insight Study on Multilateral Effectiveness in Humanitarian Crises.....	43
8. MOPAN assessments referenced.....	44
9. References	46

Boxes, Tables

Box 1. Adaptation by design and adaptation by attrition.....	8
Box 2. Conclusions on adaptation to funding and reform pressures.....	9
Box 3. Adaptation by design and adaptation by attrition	13
Table 1. Considerations for the Humanitarian Reset	10

Abbreviations and acronyms

AA	Anticipatory Action	MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
AAP	Accountability to Affected People	MO	Multilateral Organisation
ADB	Asian Development Bank	MOPAN	Multilateral Performance Network
AfDB	African Development Bank	ODA	Official Development Assistance
AI	Artificial Intelligence	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund	OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)	PSEAH	Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	UN	United Nations
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning	UN80	United Nations 80th Anniversary Reform Initiative
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FCAS	Fragile and Conflict-Affected States	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
GSSC	Global Shared Services Centre	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
HDP Nexus	Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus	UN Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ICT	Information and Communications Technology	UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank	USG	United Nations Under-Secretary-General
IFI	International Financial Institution	WB	World Bank
IHL	International Humanitarian Law	WFP	World Food Programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration	WHO	World Health Organization

Executive summary

Image credit: IOM/Claudia Rosel Barrios 2022

While multilateral organisations (MOs) responding to humanitarian crises are adapting to today's funding pressures, the critical question is whether that adaptation is strategically designed or is driven by attrition.

MOPAN evidence shows that reform can enhance MO's focus, efficiency and responsiveness when it is deliberately designed and adequately resourced.

By contrast, poorly managed cuts risk eroding capabilities and accountability, resulting in a smaller humanitarian system that will not automatically be more effective, efficient, or locally led.

Context

The humanitarian system is entering a period of acute financial constraint while pursuing ambitious reforms to make humanitarian action more focused, efficient, locally led and accountable. Between 2023 and 2025, international humanitarian assistance declined by 29.7%, from USD 47.4 billion to USD 33.3 billion, with the sharpest contraction occurring in 2025 (ALNAP, 2026^[1]). At the same time, the IASC Humanitarian Reset and the New Humanitarian Compact under the UN80 Initiative are seeking to sharpen prioritisation, simplify coordination, expand common services, strengthen country-level leadership and accountability, and shift greater power and resources towards local actors.

Though the magnitude and breadth of recent cuts and reform agendas are unprecedented, neither resource constraints nor reform pressures are entirely new phenomena. Well before 2025, humanitarian needs grew faster than available financing, and many MOs relied heavily on short-term and earmarked funding. In some cases, individual MOs, such as the ICRC and WFP, also faced organisation-specific crises that resulted in significant funding contractions, distinct from broader system-wide trends. In parallel, the Grand Bargain, the Humanitarian Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus and reforms around localisation, cash assistance, anticipatory action and accountability to affected populations were already requiring MOs to change how they operated and delivered.

This review examines what can be learnt from these earlier instances. It draws on the most recent MOPAN assessments of 19 MOs with roles in crisis prevention, preparedness, response or recovery¹. The review is retrospective and does not seek to predict the effects of the Humanitarian Reset, the New Humanitarian Compact or the sharp funding reductions that occurred in 2025 and accelerated the decline in funding.

¹ These include FAO, IOM, OHCHR, OCHA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UN-Habitat, UNFPA, UN Women, WFP and WHO; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); and six international financial institutions (IFIs): the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank

What does MOPAN evidence tell us?

Box 1. Adaptation by design and adaptation by attrition

Building on the framework developed in MOPAN's Mapping of Multilateral Organisations' Response to the Current Funding Environment (MOPAN, 2025^[5]), this review distinguishes between adaptation by design and adaptation by attrition. **Adaptation by design** is characterised by deliberate strategic choices, adequate resources for implementation, meaningful transfers of authority, and clarity of roles within organisations and across the system. In this case, change is strategically steered and essential capacities are protected. **Adaptation by attrition**, on the other hand, occurs where abrupt funding cuts drive a reactive contraction characterised by immediate cost reductions that risk eroding organisational capabilities, weakening reform implementation and transferring risks and responsibilities without corresponding resources and authority.

MOPAN evidence shows that MOs have repeatedly adapted to resource and reform pressures through prioritisation, restructuring, workforce and organisational restructuring, operational innovation, new delivery modalities and stronger collaboration. Five cross-organisational lessons emerge from this evidence. The effectiveness of these adaptations, however, depends not only on the measure adopted, but on how they are designed, resourced and implemented.

Prioritisation strengthens organisational focus when it is strategic, explicit, and clearly communicated. As reflected in the MOPAN assessment of the ICRC, clear choices about mandate, comparative advantage and the capabilities to protect can help organisations concentrate scarce resources where they add greatest value. By contrast, prioritisation driven mainly by the availability of project-specific funding can fragment strategies and shift difficult choices to country offices, such as in the case of WFP.

Organisational restructuring and workforce changes can improve coherence and reduce duplication, but cost reduction does not in itself constitute an efficiency gain, as demonstrated by the MOPAN assessments of WFP, IOM, OCHA, UN-Habitat, FAO, OHCHR, and the ICRC. These measures are more likely to support effective adaptation when they are aligned with strategic priorities and protect essential technical, operational and field capacities. Staff reductions are among the most readily available responses to budget pressure, yet poorly planned reductions can weaken technical expertise, institutional memory, staff well-being, oversight and surge capacity, and may reverse earlier decentralisation gains.

Operational and programming innovations produce more durable gains when they are embedded in organisational systems and backed by sufficient expertise, financing and country-level capacity. MOPAN's assessments of UNHCR, IOM, and UNDP illustrate how digitalisation, improved procurement and supply chains can result in efficiency gains. Innovations in programming and delivery modality such as cash assistance, preparedness, and anticipatory action can also improve responsiveness, as demonstrated in the case of WFP, FAO, UNHCR, UNDP, and WHO. Yet implementation is often uneven because of insufficient resources, organisational bottlenecks or limited country-level capacity, as found in the assessment of IOM.

Efforts to advance localisation and accountability to affected populations remain contingent on the availability of sufficient resources and the transfer of decision-making authority. Progress is strongest where flexible financing, capacity support, meaningful participation and fair risk-sharing are combined, as illustrated in the MOPAN assessments of UNFPA, UN Women, UN-Habitat. Conversely, heavy compliance requirements, inadequate overhead recovery and limited decision-making authority can shift responsibilities and risks to local actors without shifting power, as in the case of IOM and OCHA.

Collaboration can reduce duplication and allow a clearer division of labour when shared capacities and complementary roles are adequately supported. Shared services, such as UNDP's Global Shared Services Centre or WFP's United Nations Response Depot, mutual recognition, integrated supply chains and stronger collaboration across the HDP Nexus offer opportunities for efficiency and complementarity. Multilateral development banks can play an important role in sustaining public services, preparedness, resilience and recovery, as demonstrated in the case of the World Bank and some regional development banks, but they complement rather than replace rapid, needs-based humanitarian action.

Across these areas, **governance and financing arrangements shape whether adaptation proceeds by design or attrition.** Governing bodies and donors can enable strategically managed change through clear direction, political support and flexible, predictable resources. Abrupt funding cuts, short-term earmarking and uncertainty over future funding, by contrast, constrain planning and tend to encourage reactive decision-making.

Implications for reform

The central lesson from recent MOPAN evidence is that the critical question is not whether MOs adapt to funding pressures and reform agendas, but how they adapt. Where organisations are able to pursue **adaptation by design**, funding and reform pressure can support beneficial change if donors and governing bodies make explicit choices about priorities, trade-offs, and the capabilities that need to be protected. Organisation structures and operating models are most coherent when they follow mandate and strategy rather than the distribution of projected income.

Many reforms also require investment. Digitalisation, shared services, preparedness, anticipatory action, accountability to affected populations and effective local partnerships only deliver durable gains when organisations can finance the staff, systems, training, and country-level capacity needed to implement them. Similarly, decentralisation and localisation improve responsiveness only when decision-making authority and resources move together.

By contrast, **adaptation by attrition** is observed when repeated workforce reductions hollow out technical expertise, oversight, institutional memory, and surge capacity, while under-resourced innovations linked to reform agendas widen the gap between corporate commitments and operational practice. Attrition can also produce devolution without empowerment. Delivery responsibilities, risks, and difficult prioritisation decisions may be pushed towards country offices and local actors without a corresponding transfer of resources or influence. The result may therefore be a smaller humanitarian system that is not necessarily more coherent, accountable, or locally led.

The type of adaptation has clear implications for an MO's ability to deliver in crisis and to meet its corporate reform commitments at the field level. Whether the Humanitarian Reset delivers a more focused and effective system will depend on whether current contraction is governed through deliberate choices about what the system should preserve, change, and stop doing.

Box 2. Conclusions on adaptation to funding and reform pressures

Adaptation by design

- Deliberate choices are based on mandate and comparative advantage;
- Essential capabilities are identified and protected;
- Authority moves with resources;
- Reform is financed and implemented;
- Roles and transition points are clear.

Adaptation by attrition

- Reactive contraction is driven by immediate financial pressure;
- Expertise, oversight, and field capacity are progressively hollowed out;
- Responsibilities and risks move without resources or influence;
- Ambiguity and fragmentation persist.

Considerations for the Humanitarian Reset

The considerations below draw on this review's conclusions to suggest practical actions for MOs, MOPAN members, and other stakeholders in support of the priorities of the Humanitarian Reset under conditions of marked resource uncertainty.

Table 1. Considerations for the Humanitarian Reset

Humanitarian Reset pillar	Key Consideration	MOs	MOPAN members and other stakeholders
Define	<i>Make prioritisation a collective and strategic endeavour</i>	Make trade-offs between immediate lifesaving assistance and other longer-term objectives explicit in hyper-prioritised plans. Identify and protect critical operational and technical capabilities during contraction, with clear guidance to country offices on programme and workforce reductions.	Provide as much predictability as possible regarding future funding and communicate prospective reductions early enough for MOs to prioritise programmes and manage workforce adjustments strategically.
Deliver	<i>Protect the capabilities required for effective programming</i>	Assess explicitly how restructuring and budget reductions affect capabilities for cash assistance, anticipatory action, and accountability to affected population and avoid disproportionately reducing the staff, systems, and operational capacity needed to sustain them.	Maintain flexible contingency and pre-arranged financing for rapid response and anticipatory action; Recognise accountability to affected populations as an essential programme function; and Consider the need for long-term investments in specialist programming capacity when making funding decisions.
Devolve	<i>Transfer power and resources, not only responsibilities and risks</i>	Integrate localisation objectives into restructuring and efficiency decisions, including through consultation with local actors; Avoid disproportionately reducing direct financing and institutional-cost recovery for local partners; and Transfer meaningful decision-making authority alongside implementation responsibilities, while clarifying risk-sharing and duty of care	Require transparent onward-funding arrangements, fair overheads and meaningful local participation in programme governance.

Humanitarian Reset pillar	Key Consideration	MOs	MOPAN members and other stakeholders
Defend	<i>Safeguard people and sustain trust</i>	Protect essential capacities for PSEAH, anti-fraud, aid-diversion, data protection, investigations and accountability; Apply proportionate, risk-based controls that do not unnecessarily delay assistance or transfer excessive administrative burdens to partners; and Maintain transparent communication on serious incidents.	Recognise safeguarding, investigation and oversight as essential delivery costs.
Enablers	<i>Build collective capacity around comparative advantage</i>	Clarify complementarities and transition points between humanitarian and development actors, including MDBs - particularly in protracted crises; Expand mutual recognition, shared services, integrated procurement and supply-chain arrangements where they generate demonstrable gains; and For MDBs, strengthen crisis and fragility frameworks and use appropriate instruments to sustain and strengthen national systems, preparedness, resilience and recovery.	Require MOs to articulate their comparative advantage across crisis anticipation, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, and align funding accordingly; Protect shared services and integrated supply-chain capacities from uncoordinated agency-level cuts; and Use governing bodies to encourage mutual recognition and common services.

The review of previous MOPAN assessments will provide the basis for the next two outputs of the MOPAN Insights study on multilateral effectiveness in humanitarian crises. The second output will examine how the funding contraction and reform initiatives that intensified from 2025 are affecting MOs operating in humanitarian crises, including how they are adapting and the difficult choices and trade-offs they are making. The third output will look further ahead, reflecting on comparative advantage by identifying the functions that need to be performed for the humanitarian system to deliver assistance effectively in the future, and considering how MOs are positioned to perform these core functions.

1. Introduction

Image credit: IOM Ukraine / Mapia

Introduction

In 2026, multilateral organisations (MOs) responding to crises face rapidly rising humanitarian needs, driven by conflict, climate-related shocks, displacement, health emergencies and repeated violations of international humanitarian law, with 239 million people estimated to require humanitarian assistance and 88.7 million people facing the most severe and life-threatening needs (OCHA, 2025^[2]). At the same time, the availability and predictability of international finance to respond to crises have deteriorated sharply: preliminary OECD data indicate that official development assistance (ODA) from DAC donors fell by 23.1% in real terms in 2025, while humanitarian funding reached its lowest level since 2016 (OECD, 2026^[3]). This widening gap between needs and resources has forced MOs to adopt hyper-prioritisation by concentrating assistance on the most urgent, life-threatening needs. These unprecedented funding cuts have become a key driver of system-wide reform, triggering the Humanitarian Reset and the New Humanitarian Compact, which seek to make the system faster, lighter, more locally led, and more efficient.

The funding and reform pressures experienced since 2025 are exceptional in their breadth and magnitude. However, previous humanitarian reform agendas existed and at least some humanitarian MOs have been exposed to episodes of resource scarcity in the past. Since the mid-2010s, humanitarian financing has increased substantially but it has not kept pace with the faster growth in humanitarian needs and associated funding requirements, resulting in a widening humanitarian funding gap – particularly as large contributions to the humanitarian response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Ukraine crisis were not sustained (Rieger et al., 2024^[4]). Indeed, in previous years, MOs working in crises have repeatedly been asked to respond to changing patterns of need, new policy commitments, shifts in donor financing, and calls for greater efficiency, accountability, and proximity to crisis-affected people (see, for example, the 2012 Transformative Agenda, the 2015 Grand Bargain and 2016 New Way of Working).

MOPAN assessments show that these pressures have led MOs to revise strategic priorities, restructure operations, change staffing and delivering models, develop new partnerships, and strengthen their performance management and accountability mechanisms. Some adaptations have enabled MOs to become more agile, responsive, and cost-effective. Others have weakened institutional capacity or transferred risks and pressures to country offices or implementing partners. Importantly, reductions in expenditure are not in themselves evidence of greater efficiency or effectiveness. Some measures may generate immediate savings, but their implications for organisational efficiency and effectiveness depend on whether they enable an MO to focus resources and preserve essential capabilities, or instead erode the capacities needed to deliver its mandate. This pattern is particularly relevant today, as the combination of rapid reforms and financial constraints could have lasting effects – positive or negative – on organisational effectiveness in responding to crises.

This review examines cases through the lens of **adaptation by design** and **adaptation by attrition (Box 2)**. The distinction is not strictly binary: the same measure can move towards attrition when its implementation is rushed, weakly steered, or under-resourced.

Box 3. Adaptation by design and adaptation by attrition

Building on the framework developed in MOPAN's Mapping of Multilateral Organisations' Response to the Current Funding Environment (MOPAN, 2025^[5]), this review distinguishes between adaptation by design and adaptation by attrition. **Adaptation by design** is characterised by deliberate strategic choices, adequate resources for implementation, meaningful transfers of authority, and clarity of roles within organisations and across the system. In this case, change is strategically steered and essential capacities are protected. By contrast, **adaptation by attrition** occurs where abrupt funding cuts drive a reactive contraction characterised by immediate cost reductions that risk eroding capabilities, weakening reform implementation and transferring risks and responsibilities without corresponding resources and authority.

Against this background, this output focuses on the lessons that can be drawn from past MOPAN assessments about how MOs responding to crises have adapted to resource constraints and implemented humanitarian reforms. The review of past MOPAN assessments is the first output of the MOPAN Insight Study on Multilateral Effectiveness in Humanitarian Crises, which aims to generate insights to support a more effective and better-informed adaptation of the multilateral humanitarian system in the context of funding contraction and organised reform processes. This review will be followed by a mapping of the measures that MOs have been taking to adapt to the current funding cuts and reform agendas, as well as by an analysis of the comparative advantage of the main MOs operating in humanitarian crises in delivering core functions within the humanitarian system in the context of reduced resources.

1.1 | Scope, objectives, and limitations

The analysis draws on the most recent MOPAN assessments of 19 multilateral organisations with a role in humanitarian crisis prevention, preparedness, response, or recovery. These include FAO, IOM, OHCHR, OCHA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UN-Habitat, UNFPA, UN Women, WFP and WHO; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); and six international financial institutions (IFIs): the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank. The assessments were published between 2021 and 2026 and therefore cover different assessment periods and organisational contexts. The study's objective is not to rank these organisations, but rather to draw across the MOPAN evidence base to identify recurring patterns and lessons that may be relevant to MOs operating under current conditions.

Evidence was obtained from the assessments' main reports as well as from their technical annexes and coded manually using MAXQDA. The analysis also draws on relevant MOPAN Insights studies, including *Multilateral Effectiveness in a Shifting Landscape* (MOPAN, 2025^[5]), *PSEAH in IFIs: Progress, Gaps and the Road Ahead* (MOPAN, 2026^[6]), *Progress on PSEAH: From Words to Deeds* (MOPAN, 2023^[7]), *Rethinking Humanitarian Effectiveness Organisations* (MOPAN, 2022^[8]). Additional external documentary public sources have been consulted to provide context or complement existing MOPAN evidence. As a desk-based review, the analysis is grounded solely on the above-mentioned documentary sources and does not draw on interviews or other forms of primary data collection.

Where the evidence allows, the analysis distinguishes between measures that reduce expenditure and those associated with wider efficiency and effectiveness gains. However, it is important to note that MOPAN assessments do not always explicitly attribute an organisational change to a particular funding constraint or reform commitment, especially where several internal and external pressures were operating simultaneously. The assessments also cover different time periods and MOs with varying mandates, governance arrangements, financing structures, and operational models. An adaptation that was appropriate for one MO cannot therefore be assumed to be necessarily adequate for a different organisation.

As it relies on past evidence, this review is retrospective. It does not aim to make predictions on potential results of the Humanitarian Reset, the New Humanitarian Compact or other ongoing reforms, nor does it attempt to estimate the impact of the funding reductions that began in 2025. Instead, the review aims to support MOs as they seek to remain effective and fit for the future; to inform MOPAN members and other donors in their funding, bilateral, and formal governance engagement with organisations working in crises; and to help partners and interested stakeholders better understand how these MOs respond when resources contract and expectations expand.

1.2 | About MOPAN Assessments

A MOPAN assessment provides a holistic diagnostic of an organisation's performance taking into account the history, mission, context, trajectory and journey of the organisation. It presents analytical justifications for ratings and provides multidimensional insights on organisations based on the MOPAN indicator framework.

MOPAN assessments are conducted through an independent, rigorous process and take a collaborative approach to ensure that the findings resonate with an organisation and its stakeholders. MOPAN assessments aim to build organisational learning in an iterative process that makes reporting accessible and leaves an 'audit trail' of findings.

MOPAN assessments draw on multiple lines of evidence (documentary, survey, and interviews) from sources within and outside an organisation to validate and triangulate findings against the MOPAN indicator framework. The assessment process efficiently builds layers of data by using different streams, which reduces the burden on the organisation being assessed.

The portfolio of organisations to assess is decided every two years by MOPAN's Steering Committee, who also select two, and sometimes more, member states to act as Institutional Leads, or champions of each assessment.

MOPAN's 2022 study *Rethinking Effective Humanitarian Organisations* concluded that MOPAN needed to adapt its framework for assessing organisations working in crises to better reflect the nature of humanitarian operations, including the policy environment, and the practical requirements of working in crisis situations (MOPAN, 2022^[8]). Four of the MOs considered in this review – IOM, UNHCR, WFP, and ICRC – have been evaluated using the MOPAN Adapted Framework for MOs working in Crises (MOPAN, 2022^[9]).

2. Context: Then and now

Image credit: BERZGHAL, Steve | ICRC

2.1 | 2025: A watershed year for the humanitarian system

The humanitarian system entered 2026 following an exceptional contraction in levels of international aid. Preliminary OECD data indicate that official development assistance (ODA) from Development Assistance Committee countries and associates fell by 23.1% in real terms in 2025, to USD 174.3 billion. This was the largest annual contraction in the history of ODA and followed an earlier decline in 2024, with cuts by France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States accounting for 96% of the total decline. Multilateral ODA also fell for the second consecutive year, including a 27% reduction in core contributions to the UN system (OECD, 2026^[3]).

International humanitarian assistance has declined for three consecutive years, reversing a previous longer-term expansion in humanitarian financing. This decline began modestly in 2023, when a reduction in private contributions from their 2022 peak outweighed the growth in public humanitarian ODA. The contraction then worsened significantly in 2024 and 2025: humanitarian assistance fell by 29.7% over these two years, from USD 47.4 billion in 2023 to USD 33.3 billion in 2025. The sharpest reduction took place in 2025, when funding fell by 20%, or USD 8.1 billion compared to 2024 levels. Total international humanitarian assistance has now returned to 2017 levels. The US and Germany accounted for 88% of the reduction in 2025, with changes among other donors, including increased contributions from some Gulf states, also reshaping the composition of the funding base by reducing the weight of OECD-DAC donors (ALNAP, 2026^[11]).

It is worth noting that since December 2025 the US has begun to channel large allocations, so called 'macro awards', to OCHA-managed pooled funds and selected UN agencies, thus slowing the downward trend in humanitarian funding. In December 2025, the US pledged USD 1.9 billion to OCHA Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), followed by an additional USD 1.8 billion allocation in May 2026 (State, 2026^[10]). In June 2026, the US State Department announced a USD 1 billion macro award to UNICEF and WFP (U.S. Department of State, 2026^[11]), followed by a USD 200 million allocation to the ICRC and the IFRC in July 2026 (U.S. Department of State, 2026^[12]). While US humanitarian funding has shrunk overall, the scale of its new allocations to OCHA-managed pooled funds make it one of their largest contributors.

These financial trends are evolving at the same time as ambitious and partly overlapping reform agendas are launched and pursued across the system. The IASC-wide Humanitarian Reset seeks to refocus the broader humanitarian system on saving lives, simplifying coordination and planning, strengthening leadership and accountability at the local level, and shift greater power and resources to local actors. The Reset is organised around four priority areas: Define, concentrating efforts on the most severe needs through prioritisation; Deliver, making coordination and operations lighter and more responsive to the needs of people affected by crises; Devolve, strengthening locally led action; and Defend, protecting humanitarian principles and advocating for unrestrained humanitarian access. These priority actions are supported by enablers stemming from partnerships, especially with IFIs and development actors, quality funding from donors, increased efficiency, data and innovation (IASC, 2025^[13]).

Within the UN system, the New Humanitarian Compact (work package 2, workstream 3 Shifting Paradigms, UN80 Initiative) emphasises shorter and more prioritised Humanitarian Response Plans, pushes for integrated supply chains, expanded common services, and greater interoperability of humanitarian data systems, as well as for more coordinated humanitarian diplomacy and sharper division of roles among UN entities with a humanitarian mandate. The Compact and the Reset are closely connected and some priority actions are implemented jointly, but have a different scope, with the Compact focusing exclusively on UN entities, while the Reset applies to the wider humanitarian system.

Alongside these humanitarian reform agendas, multilateral development banks (MDBs) continue to adapt their approaches to fragility, as demonstrated by the World Bank's latest 2026-2030 strategy placing job creation at the centre of its engagement in settings affected by fragility, conflict, and violence (World Bank Group, 2026^[14]).

2.2 | Reform demands and resource constraints before 2025

While the simultaneous occurrence of both severe reductions in levels of international humanitarian assistance and system-wide reforms is unprecedented in scale and scope, MOs have experienced resource constraints and reform pressures well before 2025.

In terms of financial pressures, while since the mid-2010s, funding for UN-coordinated humanitarian appeals increased significantly from just over USD 10 billion in 2014 to more than USD 30 billion in 2022, it has been outpaced by the rapid escalation of humanitarian needs and associated funding requirements, which has led to a widening humanitarian financing gap. Between 2014 and 2023 the share of humanitarian requirements met fell from 62% to 45%, leaving a USD 31.5 billion funding gap in 2023 (Rieger et al., 2024, p. 16[4]).

The exceptional contributions received in 2021 and 2022 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and other large emergencies subsequently fell in 2023 towards or below pre-pandemic levels, while needs and delivery costs remained elevated. WFP, for example, received record contribution revenue of US\$14.1 billion in 2022, before experiencing a sharp decline in subsequent years (WFP, 2023[14]). At the same time, higher food, fuel, transport and procurement costs reduced the volume of assistance that could be delivered with a given level of funding. In addition, a few MOs, such as WFP and the ICRC, also faced organisation-specific financial crises that resulted in significant funding contractions, distinct from broader system-wide trends.

Many humanitarian MOs were already heavily dependent on voluntary, short-term and earmarked contributions well before 2025 (Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 2025[15]). Dependence on a small number of donors left MOs sensitive to changes in donor priorities, while tightly earmarked funding limited their ability to transfer resources between operations, invest in core capabilities, or pursue strategic priorities that did not attract project-specific financing. A 2017 Joint Inspection Unit review of donor reporting requirements across the UN system found that voluntary contributions, most of them earmarked, accounted for approximately 70% of UN system revenue in 2015. It also identified a proliferation of donor-specific programme and financial reporting requirements in addition to organisations' established corporate and governing-body reporting (Joint Inspection Unit, 2017[16]).

At the same time, MOs faced pressure to reform and change how humanitarian assistance was delivered. Since its launch following the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the Grand Bargain has called on both donors and humanitarian MOs to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and direct a greater share of resources towards people in need. In its successive iterations, the Grand Bargain has promoted and emphasised more flexible and predictable funding, cash-based assistance, systematic localisation, and stronger participation and accountability mechanisms for crisis-affected people (IASC, 2026[17]). Beyond the Grand Bargain, over the last decade, the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus and issues such as anticipatory action were also at the forefront of discussions around the role and responsibilities of multilateral organisations operating in crisis settings.

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) were also strengthening their engagement in fragile and crisis-affected contexts as development rather than core humanitarian actors, seeking to preserve hard-won development gains during protracted crises, address underlying drivers of fragility and strengthen partnerships across the HDP Nexus (World Bank Group, 2020[18]).

Further demands for change and increased accountability in the humanitarian system arose following incidents of aid diversion, weaknesses in oversight and cases of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. These instances included the diversion of humanitarian assistance in Yemen, Ethiopia, and Somalia (WFP, 2019[19]), as well as safeguarding scandals involving both multilateral organisations and major INGOs, from abuses documented in West Africa in the early 2000s, to subsequent failures exposed during the Ebola response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (International Development Committee, 2018[20]) (Independent Commission, 2021[21]). In addition, pressure to demonstrate value for money and provide performance-based reporting also increased as donors faced tighter domestic budgets and greater scrutiny concerning the use of multilateral contributions (International Development Committee, 2025[22]).

What distinguishes the period since 2025 is the speed and depth of the funding contraction, which has in turn intensified and accelerated demands for reform. MOs today are being asked to undertake transformation whilst reducing programmes, staffing and operational footprint to absorb unprecedented funding cuts. Past MOPAN assessments can shed light on how MOs responded when confronted with earlier versions of the same underlying tensions, and how these adaptations impacted organisational effectiveness.

3. Adaptations at the organisational level

Image credit: CALAME, Timothée | ICRC

Across the MOPAN assessments reviewed, MOs have adapted to resource constraints and resource pressures through changes at organisational, programme and system levels, although the depth, coherence, and effectiveness of these implemented changes vary considerably. At the organisational level, adaptations have included prioritisation, restructuring and decentralisation, innovation in operational management and business processes, and measures to strengthen risk management and safeguarding, in order to maintain or improve trust with donors.

3.1 | Prioritisation

In the humanitarian space, prioritisation involves making the best use of the resources available to achieve humanitarian outcomes (Swithern and Obrecht, 2025, p. 2^[23]). As the gap between funding and needs widens, MOs must make difficult decisions, not only about which populations, locations, and activities to support, but also about which strategic objective and core organisational function to protect. This theme is central to the Humanitarian Reset, particularly its “Define” priority area (actions 1-6), which resulted in a hyper-prioritised Global Humanitarian Overview focused on assisting those facing the most severe, life-threatening needs in a smaller number of the most acute crises (IASC, 2025^[13]). **MOPAN evidence shows that prioritisation may be unavoidable under resource constraints and, if implemented effectively, can help an MO focus on its mandate, by allowing for better alignment of organisational capabilities and programming with an MO’s strategic priorities. Clear communication, both internally across organisational levels and externally with donors, partners, and beneficiaries, is essential to ensure that priorities are understood and applied consistently.**

For example, following the extraordinary surge in contributions received by WFP in 2022, funding levels rapidly reverted to pre-pandemic levels. WFP responded by reducing operating budgets of headquarters and regional bureaux by 25%, thus limiting the technical, strategic, and operational support that these structures could provide to country offices (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.11). Despite tighter resources, WFP continued to pursue both its “saving lives” and “changing lives” objectives. This preserved its broader strategic ambition, including resilience-building, but required scarce resources to be split between immediate assistance and longer-term objectives (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.45). Country offices had to manage this tension while reducing programme budgets and making difficult choices about activities, caseloads, and the size of food rations. Although decentralised decision-making allowed adaptation to local contexts, the MOPAN assessment found limited organisation-wide guidance on priorities and trade-offs. Country offices particularly lacked clearer advice on how to allocate resources between “saving lives” and “changing lives” (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p. 45 and 119). MOPAN evidence suggests that WFP had not communicated its priorities clearly enough, particularly how reductions in rations in some humanitarian settings were reconciled with the continued funding of activities in non-humanitarian countries (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.67).

In the 2022-23 period, the ICRC underwent a significant contraction due to a severe financial shortfall, driven by rising inflation, unmet donor pledges, and inadequate cash-flow risk management. As the organisation was forced to “do less with less”, ICRC’s leadership decided to deprioritise resilience programming in protracted crises to refocus instead on its core humanitarian mandate and on protection activities in conflict situations (MOPAN, ICRC Assessment Report 2026, p. 35, 40). ICRC’s leadership opted to scale back programmes in countries such as South Sudan, where the acuteness of the crisis and the intensity of the conflict had decreased since the beginning of ICRC’s operations, and concentrate its presence and resources in contexts where it was the only actor able to access certain populations affected by violence and conflict, such as Haiti ((n.a.), 2025^[24]). This strategic decision also informed the subsequent restructuring process (see section 3.2).

Across these two cases, prioritisation more closely resembled adaptation by design where leadership explicitly identified the mandate and organisational capabilities to protect and communicated the resulting trade-offs. It became more attritional where country offices had to absorb reductions without sufficiently clear organisation-wide guidance.

3.2 | Organisational restructuring, decentralisation and downsizing

Bringing decision-making closer to crisis-affected populations is central to the Humanitarian Reset’s “Devolve” priority. Organisational restructuring, decentralisation, and workforce reduction are also closely linked to the prioritisation choices illustrated above, as MOs seek to align structures and staffing with strategic objectives and bring them into line with the available financial resources.

Organisational restructuring is a common response when MOs seek to improve effectiveness, reduce duplication or manage costs (MOPAN, 2025^[25]). MOPAN evidence shows that **such reforms can strengthen coherence and clarify responsibilities within an organisation, but their benefits depend on the quality of their design, sequencing, and the adequate resourcing of their implementation.**

WFP’s 2023-24 restructuring illustrates both the opportunities and challenges involved. Triggered also by severe operating budget reductions, the exercise streamlined HQ functions, reduced the number of divisions and redefined the role of regional bureaux. MOPAN found it offered a credible route to reducing duplication and siloed working, while preserving WFP’s extended geographical reach and ability to scale up. However, its rapid implementation created anxiety among staff, and it wasn’t clear that the intended gains would be sustained (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.13). A later phase of WFP’s organisational transformation was examined by the External Auditor in 2026, who recommended to further clarify the responsibilities and accountability of regional directors (WFP Executive Board, 2026, p. 13^[26]).

Beyond cost-containment measures, organisational restructuring can also be driven by efforts to strengthen alignment with strategic priorities. IOM’s headquarters restructuring was clearly linked to the goal of ensuring greater coherence with its Strategic Vision 2019-23: the creation of Deputy Director General positions, ten central departments, and a new function for strategic planning and organisational performance helped refocus the organisation on its role as a leading operational and policy actor in addressing vulnerability and crisis, adapting to changing mobility patterns, and strengthening migration governance, as outlined in IOM’s Strategic Vision (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.36). OCHA’s 2018 New Operating Model similarly improved alignment between structure and function by reorganising the MO around functional departments that mirror its objectives and introducing mechanisms to better connect headquarters, regional and country offices. These reforms were evaluated as being broadly conducive to the organisation’s goal of working ‘as one’ (MOPAN, OCHA Assessment Report, 2021, p.20, 25, 39, 72).

The benefits of organisational restructuring are limited when reforms are only partially implemented or are not matched by sufficient resources and capacity. UN-Habitat’s intended restructuring remained only partly implemented, as insufficient core resources left critical functions covered through acting or multiple roles (MOPAN UN Habitat Technical Annex, 2024, p. 14). FAO also improved coherence through restructuring at headquarters and regional levels, but significant delays in extending reforms to country offices created capacity gaps and delivery risks (MOPAN, FAO Assessment Report, 2024, p.47).

Decentralisation is another measure used by MOs to improve organisational effectiveness while reducing costs. By moving authority closer to operations, it **can improve responsiveness to country priorities and allow programmes to adapt more rapidly to local conditions.** MOPAN evidence shows that these benefits only materialise **when roles and responsibilities are allocated clearly across headquarters, regional, and country offices, and when this devolution of authority is accompanied by adequate resourcing** (MOPAN, 2025, p. 25^[25]).

MOPAN found that WFP had delegated some strategic and operational authority to regional and country directors, enabling decisions to reflect the needs of affected populations (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.38). OCHA’s experience was more mixed: delegation in procurement and budget execution improved field-level speed and agility, but the assessment found limited evidence of broader decentralisation in budget functions and expenditure. In addition, major cuts to field staff have left OCHA less decentralised than in the previous assessment round (see below) (MOPAN, OCHA Assessment Report, 2021, p.25).

Workforce downsizing may accompany, and even precede, restructuring and prioritisation, particularly if the MO is facing significant resource constraints. Indeed, staff reductions are often one of the first readily available cost saving measures following budget cuts (MOPAN, 2025, p. 23[27]). MOPAN evidence shows that, **if not adequately planned, staff reductions can also reverse earlier decentralisation gains. While often inevitable under financial pressure, the process of reducing an MO's workforce, if not properly managed, can pose significant risks to institutional memory, succession planning, staff wellbeing, and technical capacity** (MOPAN, 2025[25]).

OCHA's substantial field-staff cuts in 2017 left the organisation less decentralised than in the previous assessment period, illustrating how workforce reductions can alter the balance of capacity between headquarters and operations (MOPAN, OCHA Assessment Report, 2021, p.25). As a result of the liquidity constraints arising from delays of Member States in providing their assessed contributions, OHCHR froze recruitment and had several positions vacant at the time of the assessment. This constrained the Office's ability to implement Human Rights Council mandates, particularly by limiting its capacity to carry out human rights monitoring missions, reducing in-country staff levels, and decreasing the number of Human Rights Advisers from 43 to 26 (MOPAN, OHCHR Assessment Report, 2026, p.22, 24; MOPAN, OHCHR Technical Annex, 2026, p. 86).

Following its 2022 financial crisis and in line with the decision to de-prioritise resilience programming (see section 3.1), the ICRC proceeded with the closure of 26 field structures in regional delegations and non-core conflict settings, including delegations in Mauritania, Malaysia, and Greece, and a substantive reduction of operations in field offices including Dakar, Nairobi, Amman, Bangkok and Panama City. However, by the end of 2023 the ICRC had also implemented a 14% workforce reduction (approximately 1800 positions), which the assessment found could pose risks to the retention of organisational knowledge and place additional pressure on remaining staff (MOPAN, ICRC Assessment Report, 2026, p.30).

Restructuring and downsizing represented adaptation by design where they reduced duplication, clarified accountabilities, and aligned structures with strategic priorities. They became more attritional where immediate savings were achieved through insufficiently planned staff or office reductions that weakened institutional memory, technical expertise or field presence.

3.3 | Innovation in operational management and business processes

Innovation in business processes and operational management has improved procurement, oversight, operational speed, and cost-efficiency. Through the digitalisation of business processes, strengthened corporate management systems and the shift to cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, and new approaches to procurement, logistics, and supply chains, MOs have increased operational agility, improved data quality and oversight, reduced delays and costs, and increased their flexibility in responding to changing needs (MOPAN, 2025, p. 16[25]). However, MOPAN evidence also suggests that MOs' ability to translate these innovations into sustainable, organisation-wide improvements is often constrained by resource limitations or strict regulations, restricting the extent to which their benefits can be distributed across the crisis contexts in which MOs operate.

UNHCR's Business Transformation Programme represents a wide-ranging effort to simplify and digitalise its operations. Its Cloud ERP system, launched in 2023, introduced new processes covering supply chains, logistics, inventory, finance, cash and treasury management, alongside reforms in results-based management, human resources, partnerships and data. MOPAN found that the shift towards cloud-based platforms had the potential to streamline core business processes, although the full benefits would depend on completing the roll-out and ensuring that staff are sufficiently trained to use the new systems effectively (MOPAN, UNHCR Assessment Report, 2024, p.43). Similarly, UNDP's transition to the cloud-based Quantum ERP system has strengthened real-time financial visibility, management oversight, and performance monitoring, while expanding the scope for location-independent service delivery (MOPAN, UNDP Assessment Report, 2026, p.32).

IOM also invested in strengthening corporate systems that had previously been fragmented and poorly integrated. Under its 2022–25 ICT Strategy, IOM developed project and financial management platforms, including PRISM and PRIMA, and began moving towards an integrated resource planning system. It also adopted a Supply Chain Management Strategy for 2022–26, created a central supply-chain division and established pre-positioned stocks. However, MOPAN noted that several processes remained managed at country-office level through home-grown applications, limiting co-ordination and potentially creating risks to data security and system integrity (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.38).

WFP has combined stronger oversight in high-risk operations with technologies, such as video surveillance, the Last Mile Application, and Track and Trace. The Last Mile Application, in particular, enables real-time recording of waybill receipts and has substantially reduced delivery delays. Yet adoption has remained uneven because of funding constraints and competing priorities (MOPAN, 2025, p. 16[25]).

Operational innovation was closer to adaptation by design where it produced demonstrable efficiency gains, through reductions in delays, transaction costs or fragmentation and where MOs financed the roll-out, maintenance and staff capacity required for organisation-wide use.

3.4 | Safeguarding from risks and maintaining trust

As ODA budgets tighten, donors demand greater transparency on how public resources are used, while current reform agendas place increasing emphasis on maintaining the integrity of humanitarian assistance and preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA/SH) (particularly in the Defend pillar of the Humanitarian Reset). MOs also face fiduciary risks related to the diversion, fraud, and misuse of humanitarian resources. Both challenges require systematic risk management to prevent harm, protect the integrity of assistance, and sustain the trust of donors, partners, and affected populations.

MOPAN evidence shows that MOs have strengthened their ability to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) by **introducing dedicated survivor-centred policies, accessible reporting mechanisms, credible investigations, and specialist staff**. MOPAN's *From Words to Deeds* study identifies **the presence of dedicated resources for PSEAH, particularly at field level, as a key condition** for translating corporate commitments into practice (MOPAN, 2023[7]). Such capacity may, however, become increasingly difficult to sustain amid funding cuts and earmarking. While rigorous, controls also need to remain proportionate, so that they do not delay assistance or transfer excessive administrative burdens and risks to partners.

IOM established a dedicated PSEAH Unit, supported by a headquarters task force and focal points at regional and country levels, and introduced an operational toolkit and mandatory staff training. MOPAN nevertheless found that implementation remained at an early stage and under-resourced, with particular risks arising from reliance on short-term contractors in high-risk contexts (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.50). WHO consolidated its approach through a new policy for preventing and addressing sexual misconduct, a 2023–25 strategy and an accompanying accountability framework. These reforms aimed to treat sexual misconduct as an enterprise-wide risk and clarify the responsibilities of personnel, managers, and the wider organisation (MOPAN, WHO Technical Annex, 2024, p.47). At the time of the assessment, the ICRC was endowed with strong PSEAH policy frameworks at headquarters level, but community-accessible reporting and complaint mechanisms on SEAH remained inconsistent at field level (MOPAN, ICRC Main Report, 2026).

MOPAN evidence also illustrates how IFIs have made significant progress since their first joint commitment to PSEAH in 2018, recognising both reputational risks and the expectations of shareholders. While IFIs, such as the ADB, AfDB, EBRD, and the World Bank have made progress internally in updating strategic frameworks in strengthening reporting, ethics, and misconduct management systems, implementation often remains uneven and fragmented (MOPAN, 2026[6]). Externally IFI accountability is operationalised through financing agreements that place primary responsibility for managing SEAH-related risks on borrowers, while IFIs are expected to support compliance through supervision and technical assistance. This model is particularly difficult to implement in fragile and conflict-affected countries, where governments often lack sufficient capacity and resources (MOPAN, 2026, p. 24[6]).

MOPAN assessments also show that, in order to respond to increased pressures to manage fiduciary and reputational risks arising from fraud, corruption and aid diversion, **MOs have strengthened partner vetting, data protection, identity and supply-chain controls, and support to high-risk offices.** Their **effectiveness depends** not simply on adopting policies following crises or major incidents, but **on sustained organisational capacity, credible accountability mechanisms, and the ability to consistently translate corporate policy and standards into operational practice at the field level.**

WFP strengthened its controls following major aid-diversion incidents in Ethiopia, Yemen, and Somalia, which exposed weaknesses in oversight, accountability and communication with donors. Its Global Assurance Framework introduced end-to-end controls across high-risk operations, including stronger identity management, clearer accountabilities, enhanced country-office support and increased investment in compliance and anti-fraud training (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.43). However, the MOPAN assessment also found that the measures introduced under the Global Assurance Framework were expected to increase implementation costs for most country offices, as much of the additional expenditure would have to be covered by individual country budgets, raising concerns about their long-term sustainability (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.76).

In the aftermath of a major data breach in 2022, the ICRC overhauled its IT infrastructure, strengthened its data protection policy framework, created the Chief Information Officer role, and increased mandatory training for staff on data management and data protection (MOPAN, ICRC Technical Annex, 2026, p.96-97).

Risk-management and safeguarding adaptations are more effective when backed by sustained capacity and proportionate controls; when under-resourced or overly burdensome, they can instead constrain delivery and shift risks to country offices and partners, thus leaning closer to adaptation by attrition.

4. Adaptations at the programme level

Image credit: IOM

4.1 | Innovation in programming and delivery modalities

MOs have responded to reform pressures by **adopting delivery modalities that give affected people greater choice and by investing in approaches intended to act before crises escalate**. MOPAN evidence shows that **cash assistance**, a central commitment of both the Grand Bargain and a key theme under the Deliver pillar of the Humanitarian Reset, improves organisational cost-efficiency thanks to reduced transaction and delivery costs (MOPAN, 2025, p. 30^[25]).

Some MOs have **strengthened preparedness capacities** through early-warning systems, contingency planning, pre-positioned supplies, and dedicated financing mechanisms, with some organisations promoting and supporting preparedness across the system, through information sharing and partner capacity building. MOs have also **integrated anticipatory action in their frameworks, systems, and programming**. However, the implementation of these delivery modalities has often **lagged behind organisational ambition, as a result of competing internal priorities, organisational bottlenecks, and insufficient funding**. Aid flows remain weighted towards crisis response, with **resources for disaster prevention and preparedness being limited to only 2% of total ODA between 2019 and 2023** (UNDRR, 2025^[28]).

Some MOs assessed by MOPAN had increased their use of cash assistance, such as UNDP and WFP. MOPAN found that WFP's shift from food assistance towards cash and vouchers offered substantial potential for value for money gains (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.90). During the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP also expanded remote-management systems and technology-enabled transfers to maintain delivery where physical access was restricted, although limited digital access risked excluding some vulnerable groups. However, in 2023 a significant proportion of staff time and resources were redirected from the Cash-Based Transfer Division to the Global Assurance Project (see section 3.4). Following the restructuring, in 2024 the Division was dissolved and responsibilities distributed among three different divisions, requiring a cross-departmental working group to ensure coordination and policy coherence (WFP Executive Board, 2024^[29]).

FAO expanded its Cash+ approach, which combines cash or vouchers with productive inputs, technical assistance, or training (Maeda and Oca Rojo, 2017^[30]). While the evaluations reviewed by MOPAN identified important benefits, procurement and implementation delays continued to affect the timeliness of transfers and accompanying inputs, compounded by the absence of systematic monitoring against seasonal calendars (MOPAN, FAO Technical Annex, 2024, p.165).

Some MOs have strengthened their readiness to respond to future crises through risk monitoring and the **strengthening of early-warning systems, enhanced contingency planning and pre-positioned supplies**. UNHCR's strong emergency response functions were further strengthened with the 2023 Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response, which established clear emergency levels, decision-making responsibilities and actions, supported by risk monitoring and pre-positioned stocks (MOPAN, UNHCR Assessment Report, 2024, p.58). At the time of the assessment, IOM was still at an early stage in developing an organisation-wide early-warning approach, but did undertake contingency planning in emergency and protracted crisis settings (MOPAN, IOM Technical Annex, 2023, p.66, 76). The organisation developed an Emergency Preparedness guidance in 2020 and is also equipped with an Emergency Preparedness Dashboard covering risks and readiness across 70 countries, supported by regional emergency focal points and context-specific early-warning systems (MOPAN, IOM Technical Annex, 2023, p.76).

Some MOs support and facilitate emergency preparedness across the system. In 2023, UNDP provided crisis-risk dashboards to 50 UN country teams, supporting analysis, early-warning systems, and risk-aware programming (MOPAN, UNDP Technical Annex, p.95). Similarly, WHO has supported national Health ministries in strengthening their health emergency preparedness capacities through dedicated guidance and capacity building (MOPAN, WHO Technical Annex, 2024, p. 62-63).

Some MOs have also identified anticipatory action as a corporate priority and integrated it into organisational frameworks and programming. UNCHR incorporated anticipatory action into COMPASS, its results-based planning and reporting framework (MOPAN, UNHCR Assessment Report 2024, p.35). WFP has increasingly used climate-risk insurance and other anticipatory instruments, such as cash combined with early-warning messaging, with evaluation evidence pointing to gains in timeliness and scale (WFP, 2025^[31]) (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.135).

OCHA upgraded anticipatory action as a corporate priority and introduced strategic steers for CERF. Indeed, CERF has evolved since 2019 from a primarily rapid-response funding mechanism, its core function that it continues to maintain, into being the leading contributor to anticipatory action globally, increasingly using forecasts, pre-agreed triggers, and pre-arranged financing to enable earlier, more proactive humanitarian responses (OCHA, 2025^[32]). However, these changes were not embedded through a formal strategy review, contributing to uncertainty and limited buy-in, while its support to national preparedness frameworks remained largely demand-driven rather than systematic (MOPAN, OCHA Assessment Report, 2021, p.72, 111). In IOM's case, MOPAN found that the absence of a dedicated funding instrument or sufficient reserves limited its capacity to translate warnings into timely anticipatory responses (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.44).

Introducing or strengthening delivery modalities such as cash assistance, preparedness and anticipatory action was closer to adaptation by design where these approaches were embedded in corporate systems, supported by dedicated expertise and financing, and monitored for timeliness, inclusion, and results. Redirected staff capacity or absent financing left implementation partial and limited the intended effectiveness gains.

4.2 | Localisation

Among the reforms shaping humanitarian action, localisation is potentially one of the most consequential, given its implications not only for how assistance is delivered, but also for how power and resources are distributed and, ultimately, for the fairness and effectiveness of humanitarian action. Advancing localisation by strengthening the leadership, capacities, and resources available to local and national actors is a central theme to the Humanitarian Reset's *Devolve* priority. The localisation agenda, however, predates the Reset, as, since 2016, the Grand Bargain has called for greater support to local responders and for a larger share of humanitarian funding to reach them directly. Localisation aims to shift decision-making, resources, and delivery closer to affected populations and to local and national actors – including local and national NGOs and civil society organisations, national and local authorities, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, and affected communities – thereby making humanitarian action more accountable and effective (Grand Bargain, 2016^[33]). Recent funding cuts have added urgency to the localisation agenda, at a time when MOs aim to reduce costs by scaling back their operational presence. Yet, despite the long-standing commitments and the more recent financial pressures creating incentives for change, localisation has struggled to gain traction at scale. At the system level, localisation remained underfunded well before the 2025 contraction in humanitarian ODA. In 2024, less than 10% of international humanitarian funding reached local and national actors directly or indirectly, while only 3.8% was provided directly, far below the Grand Bargain target of 25% (Pearson and Rieger, 2026^[34]). Nor is it an automatic response to funding cuts: while reducing MOs' operational footprints may create incentives to work more through local actors, meaningful localisation requires investment in local capacities and flexible financing, which are themselves under pressures when resources contract.

MOPAN evidence illustrates that some MOs have made progress in expanding local partnerships, financing and capacity support. However, progress remains uneven. **Localisation is more successful where MOs are able and willing to combine flexible financing, capacity building, and meaningful local participation in decision-making. It remains limited where MOs, or their donors, prefer direct implementation and local actors receive few opportunities for capacity building, while facing heavy compliance requirements or bearing a disproportionate share of the risk.**

UNFPA provides one of the clearest examples of increased direct financing: in 2023, it channelled 34.9% of its humanitarian funding, approximately USD141.5 million, to 360 local and national actors, exceeding the Grand Bargain target of 25% (MOPAN, UNFPA Assessment Report, 2025, p.34). UNHCR had focused strongly on supporting refugee-led organisations through dedicated guidance, more flexible grant arrangements, advisory structures and the Refugee-Led Innovation Fund. It had also sought to strengthen national response capacities and avoid creating parallel systems, although in some protracted crises refugee-specific arrangements can remain distinct from national services, which might limit long-term inclusion and self-reliance outcomes (MOPAN, UNHCR Technical Annex, 2024, p.85, 91). MOPAN found that UNHCR had expanded engagement with local partners through structured partnership frameworks and localisation commitments embedded in its strategic planning, coupled with internal tools, such as a *Localisation Checklist* and a guide titled “Localization in UNHCR-Led Coordination Structures”, to guide staff in the inclusion of local and displaced/refugee-led organisations (MOPAN, UNCHR, Technical Annex, p.92). While principles for sharing risk are not mentioned in the Localisation Checklist document, UNHCR often coordinates with local partners to jointly identify and manage risk (MOPAN, UNCHR, Technical Annex, p.92). However, the MOPAN assessment found that some NGOs at country level felt that UNHCR treated them less as partners and more as contractors, with little opportunity for input in project design, heavy monitoring and reporting requirements, and short and frequently renegotiated funding envelopes (MOPAN, UNHCR Technical Annex, 2024, p.88).

OCHA had advanced localisation mainly by increasing national actors’ participation in humanitarian coordination and expanding their access to financing through its pooled funds. Country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) and CERF have incorporated mechanisms to promote funding being channeled to national and local organisations and can serve as an intermediary for donors unable to fund them directly (MOPAN, OCHA Main Report, 2021, p. 41). However, these efforts were not anchored in a clear organisation-wide strategy, specific indicators, or systematic assessment of national capacities (MOPAN, OCHA Main Report, 2021, p.38, 47, 48, 64). Local participation in fund governance and access to capacity support varied across localities, while alignment with national actors outside conflict settings depended heavily on individual country-office leadership (MOPAN, OCHA Main Report, 2021, p. 41, 48).

IOM is committed to localisation in principle, but its predominantly direct-delivery model and reliance on short-term funding limits its ability to strengthen the role and financing of local partners. At the time of the MOPAN assessment, IOM had opted out of the Grand Bargain commitment to spending at least 25% of its resources through local partners, with only around 5% of its budget channeled through national civil society organisations and governments (MOPAN, IOM Main Report, 2023, p.47, 60). Due to its predisposition for direct delivery, IOM also does not adequately fund and support the capacity building of local and national organisations (MOPAN, IOM Main Report, 2023, p. 60). MOPAN had a similar finding for UNICEF, although working through local organisations, did not consistently prioritise capacity building of its local partners (MOPAN, UNICEF Technical Annex, 2021, p.157).

Localisation efforts are closer to adaptation by design where local actors receive meaningful decision-making authority, adequate and flexible financing, capacity support and appropriate institutional cost-recovery. It risks becoming adaptation by attrition where MOs reduce their own presence and direct delivery role, as a rapid cost-cutting measure, while passing implementation responsibilities, compliance burdens and operational risks to local partners without commensurate resources or influence.

4.3 | Accountability to people affected by crisis (AAP)

Accountability to affected people (AAP) requires humanitarian actors to use their power responsibly and to place vulnerable and crisis-affected people at the centre of humanitarian action. It is a key component of the Humanitarian Reset’s Deliver pillar and is intended to improve the relevance, effectiveness, and dignity of humanitarian assistance by enabling affected individuals to access information and provide feedback and complaints safely.

MOPAN evidence suggests that **several MOs have increasingly embedded AAP and the inclusion of marginalised groups in organisation-wide policies, programme requirements, and staff guidance. Implementation remains uneven, particularly at field level: resource constraints can limit staff training, monitoring, and the operation of accessible feedback mechanisms, while earmarked funding restricts MO’s ability to adapt assistance in response to the inputs provided by affected populations** (ALNAP, 2025^[35]). MOPAN evidence suggests that MOs need to complement corporate guidance with sustained field-level capacity and also maintain **strong and inclusive feedback mechanisms** to ensure that the voices of those affected by crisis are heard and acted upon (MOPAN, 2022^[8]).

UN Women’s corporate policies and practices set a clear standard for accountability to beneficiary populations, although there is no single corporate statement on AAP. Accountability to beneficiaries is operationalised through a comprehensive system of guidance and procedures designed to ensure that beneficiaries are actively engaged, that their needs are addressed, and their voices are heard in programme design and implementation. The organisation also provides extensive training sessions to both staff and partners aimed at strengthening accountability to beneficiaries across all regions (MOPAN, UN Women Assessment Report, 2025, p.57).

UNICEF adopted its first organisation-wide AAP strategy in 2018 and, in the following years, it developed a corporate handbook, a toolkit, and training sessions to help staff and partners integrate AAP in programme implementation. The MOPAN assessment found that implementation gaps remain related to community engagement and feedback and complaint mechanisms, which UNICEF was addressing through the adoption of digital technologies to facilitate monitoring and ensure compliance (MOPAN, UNICEF Assessment Report, 2021, p.60-61; MOPAN, UNICEF Technical Annex, 2021, p. 130-131).

UN-Habitat had developed strong consultation and project-approval mechanisms that emphasise inclusion and accountability, including in its work on housing, land and urban responses in humanitarian settings. However, incomplete staff development, weak indicator monitoring and limited investment in reporting and learning constrains the MO’s ability to demonstrate systematic implementation and results (MOPAN, UN-Habitat Assessment Report, 2024, p.50).

An independent evaluation found that OCHA had made progress in integrating AAP into its coordination, funding, and guidance functions, but affected people’s priorities did not yet systematically drive humanitarian decision-making, advocacy, or response planning. As OCHA does not directly implement humanitarian programmes, its core AAP responsibility is to enable a collective, system-wide approach. However, fragmented approaches, unclear roles, limited leadership and accountability mechanisms, siloed working across cross-cutting priorities, and inconsistent implementation across country operations continue to constrain OCHA’s ability to ensure that humanitarian responses are consistently and meaningfully shaped by the priorities and feedback of people affected by crisis (OCHA, 2025^[36]).

Efforts to strengthen AAP were closer to adaptation by design where corporate commitments were matched by sustained field-level capacity and functioning feedback mechanisms; where these capacities were under-resourced, implementation risked becoming adaptation by attrition.

5. Adaptation through partnerships and collaboration

Image credit: RYAN, Stephen | ICRC

5.1 | Shared services, integrated global supply chains, and procurement coordination

Scaling up common services, integrating global supply chains, and coordinating procurement of key items across the humanitarian system, particularly among UN entities, are key priorities of current reform agendas, particularly of the New Humanitarian Compact of the UN80 Initiative. A further source of efficiency is mutual recognition, defined as the ability of one UN entity to rely on another entity's policies, procedures, systems, contracts and related operational mechanisms to implement activities without requiring additional evaluation or approval (Joint Inspection Unit, 2024^[37]).

MOPAN evidence shows that **these arrangements have the potential to reduce duplication, lower administrative costs, and enable faster, more efficient responses** (MOPAN, 2025^[25]). However, **their effectiveness depends on consistent implementation across MOs and sufficient resources to sustain shared platforms, services, and operational capacities on which other entities rely. At country level, progress in scaling up shared services has been remained slow**, with implementation falling short of agreed targets, thus limiting the anticipated efficiency gains and savings (MOPAN, 2025, p. 19^[25]).

UNDP plays an important role as a provider of common operational and back-office services across the UN system. Through its Global Shared Services Centre and Quantum platform, it provides services including human resources administration, payroll and finance to other UN entities, while also participating in the Global Shared Services Task Team (MOPAN, UNDP Technical Annex, 2026, p.11). UNDP reports on progress related to mutual recognition, although monitoring of mutual recognition remains limited system-wide (MOPAN, UNDP Technical Annex, 2026, p.37).

UNICEF was an early adopter of the UN development system's mutual recognition principle, under which UN entities accept one another's processes and systems in areas such as finance, procurement, logistics, information technology, administration, and human resources. This has enabled UNICEF to collaborate with UNOPS and WHO on joint procurement, including vaccines, while its Global Shared Services Centre has participated in system-wide discussions on extending administrative services to other UN entities (MOPAN, UNICEF Assessment Report, 2021, p. 49).

WFP provides some of the humanitarian system's most extensive shared logistics and supply-chain services (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.58). Through the Logistics Cluster, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, and the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot, WFP provides operational access, storage, and global transport for humanitarian and development organisations. During COVID-19, it also supported WHO procurement by transporting personal protective equipment and respiratory supplies to 56 countries and acted as a provider of last resort for other agencies. These services offer significant system-wide capacity but generate substantial recurrent costs, as illustrated by rising requirements for UNHAS and UNHRD (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.127). Furthermore, since 2022, the WFP and UNCHR have provided light vehicle leasing services to UN entities through the United Nations Fleet, which counts more than 30,000 vehicles (MOPAN, Technical Annex, 2024, p.64).

Shared services also illustrate that efficiency gains also need to be considered at the system level, not only in terms of expenditure by individual agencies. Such arrangements are closer to adaptation by design when their implementation is consistent across MOs and the shared platforms, services, and operational capacities on which other MOs depend are adequately resourced and sustained.

5.2 | Advancing the HDP Nexus

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus, adopted in 2019, calls for greater coherence among humanitarian, development, and peace actors operating in the same contexts. This objective has become increasingly urgent as crises become protracted and humanitarian organisations remain locked in long-term service delivery that cannot be sustained through scarce humanitarian financing alone. The Humanitarian Reset also emphasises the importance of achieving closer collaboration with development actors and IFIs to strengthen resilience and addressing the drivers of fragility (IASC, 2025^[13]). This implies a clear understanding of the comparative advantage of each type of actor and a well-defined, complementary division of labour. While some MOs have expanded their programming to bridge humanitarian and development interventions, others have made deliberate choices to refocus their action where they can achieve the greatest impact.

MOPAN evidence shows that **while several MOs have made significant progress in incorporating the HDP Nexus into their corporate policies and guidance, the implementation at the field level remains limited**. Operationalisation of the Nexus is constrained in particular by fragmented and insufficiently coordinated humanitarian, development, and peace funding streams, limited expertise and understanding of role complementarity among MO staff, and the absence of appropriate transition and hand-over mechanisms.

Following its financial crisis of 2022-23, the ICRC decided to focus on protection in active conflict situations and deprioritise humanitarian-development nexus activities in contexts where needs have evolved towards recovery and resilience. The MOPAN assessment found that this strategic choice was motivated by the recognition that ICRC's comparative advantage lies primarily in the acute conflict phase, and that other actors are better placed to lead once emergencies stabilise, though the extent to which ICRC has been able to facilitate transition varies across contexts (MOPAN, ICRC Assessment Report, 2026, p.40, 48).

The MOPAN assessment describes how WFP had expanded its resilience and development work to further advance both its priorities of 'saving lives' (i.e., meeting immediate humanitarian needs) and 'changing lives' (i.e., reducing vulnerability and future humanitarian need by addressing the root causes of hunger). The MOPAN assessment highlights that, while 'changing lives' work is important for WFP's engagement across the HDP Nexus and for resource mobilisation, it also carries a risk of competition and mandate overlap with other agencies (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.7). WFP integrated the HDP Nexus in its 2022-25 Strategic Plan and increasingly aimed to operationalise it through Country Strategic Plans, increased resilience programming, and a conflict sensitivity-mainstreaming strategy. Implementation nevertheless varied across countries and remained dependent on available funding, while reductions at HQ and donor pressure to refocus WFP on its humanitarian role risked weakening its programming in the development pillar of the Nexus (MOPAN, WFP Technical Annex, 2024, p.159, 162,164).

UNHCR developed an internal Strategic Plan on Engaging with Development Actors and expanded its partnership with the World Bank to promote the inclusion, resilience, and self-reliance of refugees and host communities. However, greater engagement had not consistently allowed UNHCR to transfer long-term service delivery responsibilities or establish clear 'hand-over' procedures from humanitarian assistance in protracted displacement situations (MOPAN, UNHCR Technical Annex, 2024, p.85). A 2021 independent evaluation commissioned by UNHCR found that, despite clear progress, UNHCR's humanitarian-development approach remained constrained by the incomplete internal mainstreaming of the Nexus, planning and financing systems that encouraged short-term approaches, and the absence of clear benchmarks or incentives for staff to transition out of direct service provision, particularly as staff perceived that an expanded or maintained UNHCR presence was rewarded (Steets and Lehmann, 2021^[38]).

IOM's commitment to the HDP Nexus was reflected in its Strategic Vision, Strategic Results Framework and Migration and Sustainable Development Strategy. In 2021, as part of a HQ restructuring process, IOM established the Department for Peace and Development Co-ordination was created and appointed a Special Adviser, whose main task is to ensure that IOM coordinates effectively with other entities under the umbrella of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.46). Nonetheless, the MOPAN assessment found that field-level implementation remained constrained by IOM's reliance on short-term project funds, competing donor priorities, lack of knowledge management systems, capacity constraints among national and local counterparts, and insecure operating context. In 2020, IOM developed an Integrating Conflict Sensitivity Operational Guide and an accompanying Standardized Guidance on Conflict Analysis. However, the assessment found that implementation of these tools was fragmented and unsystematic (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.47).

UNICEF had substantial corporate guidance for linking humanitarian and development programming, but the MOPAN assessment found that country teams lacked sufficient direction on UNICEF's comparative advantage and complementarity with partners across different crisis contexts (MOPAN, UNICEF Technical Annex, 2021, p.158).

Implementing the HDP Nexus is closer to adaptation by design where MOs embed it in organisational strategies and country-level practice, clarify their comparative advantage, and establish clear roles and transition arrangements with other actors. It risks becoming adaptation by attrition where funding pressures lead to retrenchment without adequate planning, financing, partner capacity or hand-over arrangements.

5.3 | The role of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)

Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) are not core humanitarian actors and cannot substitute for humanitarian organisations in delivering rapid, needs-based assistance. Their contribution in crisis and fragile contexts lies in financing the public systems and services on which affected populations depend, sustaining and/or expanding essential expenditure and social protection, and supporting national preparedness, resilience and reconstruction. Across MOPAN assessments, this role is found to be constrained by longer response timelines, conservative risk profiles, resource allocation rules that can limit access to grants or concessional finance, particularly for middle-income countries, and business models centred on government counterparts. MOPAN assessments point to **considerable variation in how far specific approaches to crisis and fragility are institutionalised across MDBs, as well as recurring challenges around the flexibility and accessibility of financing instruments, operational capacity and partnerships, and the measurement of results in fragile and crisis-affected settings**.

MOPAN evidence presents significant differences across MDBs in the extent to which crisis and fragility considerations are embedded in their institutional frameworks and operations. The World Bank is the MDB where approaches to working in situations of fragility are most institutionalised. Its 2020-25 Fragility, Conflict and Violence Strategy² established a basis for remaining engaged during crises and conflict, supported by Risk and Resilience Assessments, a central team of fragility specialists and dedicated financing windows (MOPAN, World Bank Assessment Report, 2023, pp. 52-53). A subsequent evaluation nevertheless found that strategic commitments were not always translated consistently into country programming and that increased financial commitments were not matched by proportionate administrative budgets and staffing (World Bank, 2025^[39]).

The African Development Bank (AfDB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have also strengthened their institutional approaches. The AfDB's *Strategy for Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa 2022-26* is supported by standardised Country Resilience and Fragility Assessments and increased staff presence in fragile settings (MOPAN, African Development Bank Assessment Report, 2023, p. 37). The ADB's 2021 FCAS and SIDS Approach introduced Fragility and Resilience Assessments and expanded specialist support to country teams. However, MOPAN found that Country Partnership Strategies (CPS) remained relatively generic and that limited country presence and human resources constraints within the Fragility Team hampered implementation (MOPAN, Asian Development Bank Assessment Report, 2025, p. 65).

² The MOPAN assessment refers to the World Bank Group's previous Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) Strategy. Since the assessment was conducted, the World Bank has adopted a new FCV Strategy for 2026-2030.

Other MDBs often lack both a clear approach to defining fragility and a well-defined role in conflict and crisis settings. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is a case in point. MOPAN found that it responded with considerable agility to Covid-19, the war in Ukraine and the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye, using streamlined approvals, advisory support and crisis-specific frameworks (MOPAN European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Assessment Report, 2024, p. 43, 48, 55). A subsequent evaluation of EBRD's 2021-25 Strategic and Capital Framework found that this agility was not always matched by institutional preparedness: existing processes for monitoring, reporting and disbursement were not fully suited to the scale and speed of the Ukraine response, while the Bank lacked an established crisis-response mechanism and clear internal prioritisation between immediate needs and longer-term objectives³ (EBRD, 2025[40]). The evaluation called for a more consistent approach to crises and fragility, stronger operational preparedness, and for results systems better able to capture the impact of crisis interventions (EBRD, 2025[40]).

MDBs bring a range of financing instruments to crisis contexts, including policy-based lending, emergency and contingent financing, concessional and grant financing, dedicated disaster- and crisis-response facilities, and risk-sharing instruments. These instruments can operate at scale, sustain public services, and connect crisis response with longer-term recovery. However, they generally work through governments and public institutions and therefore complement rather than replace humanitarian action.

The World Bank's dedicated instruments include the IDA FCV envelope, the Window for Host Communities and Refugees, the State and Peacebuilding Fund and the Global Concessional Financing Facility (MOPAN World Bank Assessment Report, 2023, pp. 52–53). The ADB uses its Disaster and Emergency Assistance Policy, Contingent Disaster Financing, Asian Development Fund crisis-response windows and the Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund (MOPAN Asian Development Bank Assessment Report, 2025, p. 75). Evaluations have generally found these mechanisms timely and broadly effective, while identifying weaknesses in monitoring and livelihood rehabilitation (Asian Development Bank, 2025[41]) (Asian Development Bank, 2023[42]) (Asian Development Bank, 2012[43]).

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) stands out among MDBs both because all its Borrowing Member Countries are Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and because it can channel concessional resources across income categories, including to middle- and high-income countries. This enables it to respond to the particular vulnerability of SIDS, including to climate-related shocks and disasters, in contexts where income-based eligibility rules would normally restrict access to concessional finance (MOPAN, Caribbean Development Bank Main Report, 2026, p. 11, 22). However, MOPAN found that some CDB instruments were hindered by procedural rigidity, limited scope to restructure projects and insufficient adaptive management (MOPAN, Caribbean Development Bank Assessment Report, 2026, p. 72).

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) relaxed disbursement restrictions and increased policy-based lending during COVID-19, allowing it to provide liquidity more quickly, although at some cost to other priorities, including climate finance (MOPAN Inter-American Development Bank Assessment Report, 2023, p. 27, 37). Other examples of rapid adaptation include the AfDB's USD 1.5 billion Africa Emergency Food Production Facility and the EBRD's use of credit lines and risk-sharing arrangements (African Development Bank, 2023[44]) (MOPAN, EBRD Assessment Report, 2024, p. 15). These mechanisms can help MDBs mobilise additional resources and respond to emerging needs, but they also require strong internal systems for donor engagement, implementation, and monitoring. The EBRD experience, in particular, shows that innovation in financial instruments needs to be matched by adequate institutional capacity: **the rapid expansion of donor financing and use of relatively new instruments, such as unfunded guarantees, required changes to internal processes and organisational arrangements and placed additional demands on coordination, portfolio management, and monitoring systems** (EBRD, 2025, p. 27[40]).

Across MOPAN assessments, delivery constraints extend beyond finance. MDBs increasingly seek to place staff in fragile settings, but recruitment, retention, and specialist capacity remain difficult. For some MDBs, capacity support can often remain fragmented and project-specific rather than providing the sustained institutional strengthening, which is needed in capacity-constrained contexts. The CDB assessment, for instance, identifies a need for a more strategic, longer-term, and programmatic approach to technical assistance and institutional strengthening (MOPAN, Caribbean Development Bank Assessment Report, 2026, pp. 74, 76). This can result in fragmented interventions that address immediate project requirements without strengthening the broader institutions and systems needed to manage continuing risks.

Partnerships with other development and humanitarian actors are particularly important in fragile and crisis-affected settings, where MDBs may depend on partners for access, implementation capacity, and context-specific knowledge. The World Bank's partnership with the UN stands out as it is comparatively institutionalised through the Framework for Partnership in Crisis-Affected Situations, which since 2017 has been implemented through joint analysis, operational collaboration and advocacy in fragile and crisis-affected settings (World Bank, 2023[45]). The MOPAN assessment of the World Bank also points to instances of effective collaboration, as in the case of the World Bank's work with UNHCR (see section 5.1), but it also identifies occasional sources of tension with humanitarian actors, arising from the Bank's practice of working with governments party to armed conflict and also from the implementation of strict environmental, social, security, and fiduciary safeguarding policies (MOPAN, World Bank Assessment Report, 2023, p. 76), (World Bank, 2021, p. 73[46]). MOPAN found that CDB engages in joint mechanisms with other IFIs and development partners to promote harmonisation, knowledge sharing, and common standards, but these arrangements are not yet applied consistently across country strategies and operations (MOPAN, Caribbean Development Bank Assessment Report, p. 76).

For some MDBs, results measurement remains a challenge in crisis and fragile contexts. The CDB assessment found that results reporting remained heavily focused on outputs and *ex ante* projections, with limited measurement of institutional or behavioural change, while EBRD's independent evaluation found that crisis-response results were measured largely through input and activity indicators and did not adequately capture the effects of interventions (MOPAN, Caribbean Development Bank Assessment Report, 2026, p. 80) (EBRD, 2025, p. 20[40]).

3 A more specific evaluation of EBRD's Engagement in Ukraine (2022-25) was still ongoing at the time of writing and is expected to be published in May 2027.

6. Enablers and incentives

Image credit: IOM

MOPAN evidence suggests that MO behaviour in responding to funding reductions is in part shaped by the incentives embedded in their governance and financing arrangements. On the one hand, governing and consultative bodies as well as donors can enable reform by providing MOs with strategic direction, political support, and flexible resources. On the other hand, unclear governance roles, overly tight scrutiny, reliance on short-term, earmarked contributions and insufficient funding to implement core mandates can put limits on strategic autonomy and encourage reactive decision-making. The Grand Bargain and the Humanitarian Reset therefore call for improved dialogue with donors and greater availability of flexible, predictable funding (IASC, 2025^[13]).

The MOPAN assessment of UNHCR highlighted areas for improvement in the way the organisation engages with its Executive Committee, which was established to advise the High Commissioner and to approve the use of voluntary funding (MOPAN, UNHCR Assessment Report, 2024, p.48). External stakeholders interviewed for the assessment called for earlier consultation with the Executive Committee before major decisions are made, more proactive access to documentation, and greater discussion of evaluation and audit findings (MOPAN, UNHCR Assessment Report, 2024, p.49). The assessment also reports that ExCom members did not always make full use of existing scrutiny mechanisms and sometimes advanced duplicative requests (MOPAN, UNHCR Assessment Report, 2024, p.49).

WFP's governance was assessed as broadly effective and transparent, but its Executive Board was perceived as insufficiently strategic in its approach (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.46). A 2023 Governance Review identified weaknesses in Board procedures, documentation, briefing timelines and support for member states (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.46, 54). The MOPAN assessment also highlights the need for frank dialogue between WFP, donors and the Board on acceptable levels of risk, particularly regarding aid diversion (MOPAN, WFP Assessment Report, 2024, p.42).

Financing incentives are also key in shaping MO behaviour. While funding earmarked for specific projects or crises enables IOM to respond rapidly to evolving needs, 97% of its resources were tied to specific activities or locations, orienting the MO towards short-term project delivery while limiting investment in core functions, contingency financing and organisation-wide strategic priorities (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.8,15). Despite a planned increase in assessed contributions through its new financial framework, the MOPAN assessment reported that this would only marginally reduce the share of earmarked resources out of IOM's total budget, leaving the underlying incentives of its operating model unaltered (MOPAN, IOM Assessment Report, 2023, p.8).

Similar constraints, although less pronounced, also affected UNDP and FAO (MOPAN, UNDP Technical Annex, 2026, p.19; FAO Assessment Report, 2024, p.48). Declining core funding and a marked donor preference for earmarked contributions restrict management flexibility, can draw country offices towards available funding rather than areas of organisational comparative advantage, and make it harder to finance core functions (MOPAN, UNDP Technical Annex, 2026, p.37; MOPAN, FAO Assessment Report, 2024, p. 36). In FAO's case, earmarked contributions grew while the regular budget remained effectively flat for 12 years, putting pressure on country-office capacity and limiting the MO's room for manoeuvre in pursuing corporate strategic objectives (MOPAN, FAO Assessment Report, 2024, p.32). While earmarked and short-term project funding allows a MO to increase its budget and support rapid responses by avoiding the need for internal resource reallocation, shrinking core resources limit its discretion in setting priorities and pursuing core strategic objectives (Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 2025^[15]).

7. Conclusions

Image credit: IOM Claudia Rosel Barrios

The evidence extracted from the MOPAN assessments and studies considered in this review suggests the critical question is not whether MOs adapt, but whether adaptation is determined by strategic design or emerges through attrition, with several instances of organisational adaptation falling between these two approaches and becoming more attritional when implementation remains under-resourced. This distinction is particularly relevant in 2026, as ambitious reform agendas, such as the Humanitarian Reset and the New Humanitarian Compact, are being pursued in times of pronounced uncertainty over future funding levels and the availability of sufficient core resources to adequately implement them.

7.1 | Adaptation by design

Adaptation by design is characterised by deliberate strategic choices, sufficient resources for implementation, meaningful transfers of authority, and clear roles and responsibilities within individual MOs and across the system.

Strategic steering

- Funding and reform pressure can lead to beneficial change and improvements in MO effectiveness when MO leadership, with the support of governing bodies, makes explicit choices about priorities, trade-offs, and which capabilities to protect.
- Prioritisation and restructuring are most coherent when the operating model follows mandate and strategy, rather than available projectised income.

Adequate resourcing

- Several of the adaptations considered in the MOPAN assessments required both transition/design-specific resources and continuous supporting resources. Digitalisation and the shift to cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, and innovations in programming, including preparedness, anticipatory action, accountability to affected populations, and effective local partnerships only deliver durable gains when MOs are able to finance staff, training, maintenance, and country-level implementation.
- Flexible and predictable funding, combined with steering and support from governing bodies, gives MOs room to invest in these adaptations for the long term.

Substantive transfer of power

- Decentralisation and localisation improve responsiveness only when decision-making authority and sufficient resources move together. Delegating implementation or budget reductions without commensurate support transfers responsibility rather than power.

Clarity of roles and responsibilities

- Internally, clarity of roles across the HQ, regional, and country levels reduces duplication and ambiguity.
- Externally, clarity of roles and complementarities within the UN system and across the HDP Nexus, based on each MO's comparative advantage, improves division of labour.

7.2 | Adaptation by attrition

Adaptation by attrition is characterised by reactive contraction under unpredictable resource constraints, in which immediate cost reduction takes precedence over strategic prioritisation, eroding capabilities, transferring risks downwards to the local and country level, and weakening reform implementation. Short-term and tightly earmarked funding can reinforce these dynamics by limiting MO's ability to reallocate resources, protect core capabilities, and finance organisational change over time.

Unpredictability of cuts and reactive, immediate adjustments

- Abrupt or uncertain cuts compress decision time and favour immediate expenditure reduction over strategic prioritisation. Country offices may be left to ration programmes and staffing without consistent organisation-wide guidance.
- MOPAN evidence shows that workforce reduction, coupled with decentralisation to low-cost locations, is the most readily available cost-saving measure. While such short-term budget adjustments may generate immediate fiscal savings, they also risk undermining institutional memory, reducing oversight, constraining programme delivery, and weakening an MO's capacity to effectively implement and deliver its strategy (Mapping of MO's Response to the Current Funding Environment, 2025, p. 23).

Structural hollowing out

- Workforce reductions, especially among field-based and less secure staff with temporary contracts, can reverse decentralisation and erode technical expertise, institutional memory, staff wellbeing, oversight and surge capacity. Under-resourced reforms then widen the gap between commitments made at the corporate level and operational practice in the field.

Devolution without empowerment

- Seven organisations in MOPAN's 2025 mapping of the impact of funding cuts reported reduced resources channelled to local actors (Mapping of MO's Response to the Current Funding Environment, 2025, p. 21). Adaptation by attrition can shift, delivery, risk, and difficult choices downwards at the country and local level without transferring resources or influence. The result may be a smaller system that is not more coherent, accountable or locally led, and is less able to implement the reforms that were meant to improve it.

7.3 | Considerations for the Humanitarian Reset

The considerations below draw on this review's conclusions to suggest practical actions for MOs, MOPAN members, and other stakeholders in support of the priorities of the Humanitarian Reset under conditions of marked resource uncertainty.

Define: prioritisation as a collective and strategic endeavour

For MOs

- Establish a system to measure the impact of hyper-prioritisation, including its effectiveness in prioritising life-saving assistance, but also any trade-off or negative consequence stemming from the de-prioritisation of longer-term objectives;
- Identify the capabilities that must be protected and give country offices clear guidance and escalation routes for implementing cuts in programming and country level staff.

For MOPAN members and other stakeholders

- Provide, where possible, predictability with regards to funding decisions and communicate prospective funding contractions early to enable MOs to plan, prioritise, and manage workforce adjustments.

Deliver: protect fair and effective programming practices

For MOs

- Ensure the operational capacity needed for cash assistance, anticipatory action, and accountability to affected populations is not disproportionately reduced when available resources contract.

For MOPAN members and other stakeholders

- Realign funding incentives with reform objectives, for instance by providing appropriate funding for rapid response and anticipatory action as well as for accountability to affected people
- Ensure funding reductions preserve programming capacities and expertise on cash assistance, anticipatory action, and accountability to affected populations built over several years.

Devolve: transfer power and resources, not only implementation responsibilities and risks

For MOs

- Pursue localisation objectives in restructuring and efficiency-related decisions, for example by applying the principle of subsidiarity more systematically and consulting local actors on proposed measures;
- Ensure that direct funding and institutional-cost recovery for local partners is not disproportionately affected by cuts;
- Where possible, transfer meaningful decision-making authority to national and local partners, while clarifying risk sharing and duty of care.

For MOPAN members and other stakeholders

- When making large contributions to UN entities, require transparent onward-funding arrangements, fair overheads, and meaningful local participation in governance of funded programmes.

Defend: safeguard people and sustain trust

For MOs

- Protect PSEAH, anti-fraud, aid-diversion, data-protection, investigation and accountability capacities and mechanisms when implementing budget cuts;
- Apply proportionate, risk-based controls, and promptly communicate serious incidents to governing bodies, donors, partners and affected people.

For MOPAN members and other stakeholders

- Fund safeguarding and oversight as essential delivery costs.

Enablers: build collective operational capacity

For MOs

- Clarify complementarity of roles, division of labour and transition points between humanitarian, development – including MDBs - and peace actors - particularly in protracted crises – based on comparative advantage.
- **MDBs:** Develop appropriate crisis and fragility strategies and frameworks and use dedicated instruments to sustain national systems and essential services, strengthen nationally owned early warning and analysis capacities, and finance preparedness, anticipatory action, resilience, and recovery.
- Expand shared services and mutual recognition and present full life-cycle business case to secure donor support and internal buy in.

MOPAN members and other stakeholders

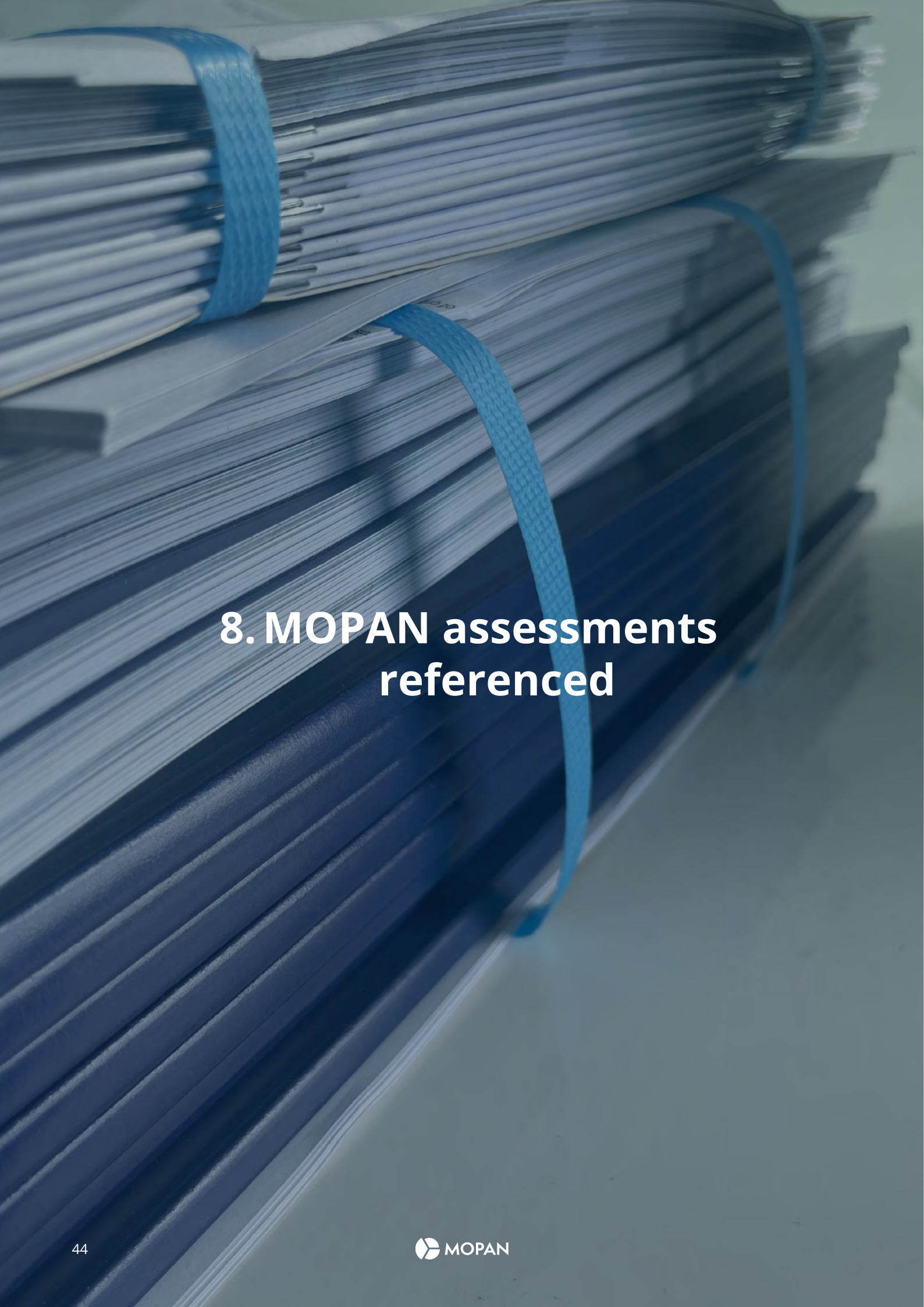
- Require multilateral organisations to clearly articulate their comparative advantage in crisis anticipation, prevention, response and recovery in relation to other actors; align funding with comparative advantages.
- Protect shared services and integrated procurement and supply chains from agency-level cuts.
- Use governing bodies to support mutual recognition and system-wide uptake of shared services, coordinated procurement, and integrated supply chains.

7.4 | Looking ahead: Next steps for the MOPAN Insight Study on Multilateral Effectiveness in Humanitarian Crises

The findings of this review of MOPAN evidence provide a starting point for considering how multilateral effectiveness may evolve as the humanitarian system responds to a more constrained and ever-changing operating environment. The next two outputs of the MOPAN Insight Study take this analysis forward by examining both the immediate organisational response to current pressures and the longer-term implications for the roles of MOs play within the system.

The second output will focus on the 2025 funding contraction and the following reform initiatives. It examines how these pressures are affecting MOs operating in humanitarian crises, how organisations are adapting, and the choices and trade-offs involved. In doing so, it considers not only changes within individual organisations, but also their implications for the performance of the humanitarian system.

The third output will shift the perspective from organisational adaptation to comparative advantage across the humanitarian system. It will identify core functions that need to be performed for the needs of people in crisis to be met and will consider how MOs are positioned to perform these functions. This will provide a basis for reflecting on where MOs add distinctive value and how roles and responsibilities across the system might evolve as resources become more constrained.



8. MOPAN assessments referenced

[MOPAN \(2023\), MOPAN Assessment of the African Development Bank \(AfDB\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2023.](#)

[MOPAN \(2025\), MOPAN Assessment of the Asian Development Bank \(ADB\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2025.](#)

[MOPAN \(2026\), MOPAN Assessment of the Caribbean Development Bank \(CDB\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2026.](#)

[MOPAN \(2024\), MOPAN Assessment of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development \(EBRD\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2024.](#)

[MOPAN \(2024\), MOPAN Assessment of the Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2024.](#)

[MOPAN \(2023\), MOPAN Assessment of the Inter-American Development Bank \(IDB\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2023.](#)

[MOPAN \(2026\), MOPAN Assessment of the International Committee of the Red Cross \(ICRC\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2026.](#)

[MOPAN \(2023\), MOPAN Assessment of the International Organization for Migration \(IOM\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2023.](#)

[MOPAN \(2026\), MOPAN Assessment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights \(OHCHR\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2026.](#)

[MOPAN \(2021\), MOPAN Assessment of the United Nations Children’s Fund \(UNICEF\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2021.](#)

[MOPAN \(2026\), MOPAN Assessment of the United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2026.](#)

[MOPAN \(2025\), MOPAN Assessment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women \(UN Women\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2025.](#)

[MOPAN \(2024\), MOPAN Assessment of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2024.](#)

[MOPAN \(2024\), MOPAN Assessment of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme \(UN-Habitat\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2024.](#)

[MOPAN \(2021\), MOPAN Assessment of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs \(OCHA\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2021.](#)

[MOPAN \(2025\), MOPAN Assessment of the United Nations Population Fund \(UNFPA\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2025.](#)

[MOPAN \(2023\), MOPAN Assessment of the World Bank \(IDA and IBRD\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2023.](#)

[MOPAN \(2024\), MOPAN Assessment of the World Food Programme \(WFP\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2024.](#)

[MOPAN \(2024\), MOPAN Assessment of the World Health Organization \(WHO\), MOPAN Publishing, Paris © MOPAN 2024.](#)

9. References

[24] (n.a.) (2025), *The prioritisation challenge in focus: ICRC*, ALNAP, <https://alnap.org/help-library/resources/alnaps-a-matter-of-priorities-a-podcast-on-tough-choices-in-humanitarian-funding-trailer/the-prioritisation-challenge-in-focus-icrc/> (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[44] African Development Bank (2023), *Supporting African countries through a global food crisis: The African's Development Bank's African emergency food production facility*, https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/news_documents/african_development_bank_group_africa_food_emergency_production_plan_summary_copy-v2.pdf (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[1] ALNAP (2026), *Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) report 2026*, <https://alnap.org/help-library/resources/global-humanitarian-assistance-gha-report-2026/> (accessed on 12 August 2026).

[35] ALNAP (2025), *Essential Briefings for Humanitarian Decision-makers: Accountability to Affected Populations*, https://alnap.hacdn.io/media/documents/ALNAP_Explain_APP_Briefing_072025.pdf (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[41] Asian Development Bank (2025), *Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund*, https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/Evaluation%20Document/741506/files/pper_apdrf_2009-2024.pdf (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[42] Asian Development Bank (2023), *Navigating through the Polycrisis: Asian Development Fund 12 and 13 Support to Vulnerable Countries*, https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/Evaluation%20Document/863031/files/ce_adf12-13_0.pdf (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[43] Asian Development Bank (2012), *ADB's Response to Natural Disasters and Disaster Risks*, https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/evaluation-document/35987/files/ses-nd_5.pdf (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[48] Caribbean Development Fund (n.d.), *Special Development Fund Cycle 11*, <https://www.caribank.org/special-development-fund-cycle-11> (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[15] Dag Hammarskjold Foundation (2025), *Managing Unprecedented Times*, <https://financingun.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/DHF-Financial-report-2025-web.pdf> (accessed on 12 August 2026).

[40] EBRD (2025), *Technical Report: The EBRD's Response to Crises*, https://www.ebrd.com/content/dam/ebrd_dxp/assets/pdfs/evaluation/2025/MTE-SCF-TR-Crisis.pdf (accessed on 14 August 2026).

[33] Grand Bargain (2016), *The Grand Bargain - A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need*, https://www.jips.org/uploads/2019/03/Grand-Bargain-final-22May2016.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

[17] IASC (2026), *The Grand Bargain (Official website)*, <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>.

[13] IASC (2025), *Humanitarian Reset Roadmap*, <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/2025-11/Humanitarian%20Reset%20Roadmap%2C%2010%20November%202025.pdf> (accessed on 12 August 2026).

[21] Independent Commission (2021), *Final Report of the Independent Commission on the review of sexual abuse and exploitation during the response to the 10th Ebola virus disease epidemic in DRC*, <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/final-report-of-the-independent-commission-on-the-review-of-sexual-abuse-and-exploitation-ebola-drc> (accessed on 12 August 2026).

- [22] International Development Committee (2025), *Assessing Value, Ensuring*, <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/49950/documents/269036/default/> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [20] International Development Committee (2018), *Sexual exploitation and abuse in the aid sector*, https://committees.parliament.uk/work/3401/sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-in-the-aid-sector-inquiry/publications/?utm_source=chatgpt.com (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [37] Joint Inspection Unit (2024), *Review of the implementation of the principle of mutual recognition within the United Nations system*, https://www.unjiu.org/sites/www.unjiu.org/files/jiu_rep_2024_4_english.pdf (accessed on 13 August 2026).
- [16] Joint Inspection Unit (2017), *Review of Donor Reporting Requirements Across the United Nations System*, https://www.unjiu.org/sites/www.unjiu.org/files/jiu_rep_2017_7_english.pdf (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [30] Maeda, S. and M. Oca Rojo (2017), *Cash +: FAO's approach*, <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/i7864en> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [6] MOPAN (2026), *PSEAH in IFIs: Progress, Gaps and the Road Ahead*, <https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/performance-insights/pseah-ifi-insight.html> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [47] MOPAN (2025), *Doing Better With Less: Unlocking Efficiency in the UN*, <https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/performance-insights/multilateral-effectiveness-in-a-shifting-landscape/efficiency-thematic-brief-summary.html>.
- [25] MOPAN (2025), *Doing Better With Less: Unlocking Efficiency in the United Nations*, <https://www.mopan.org/content/dam/mopan/en/publications/our-work/insights/thematic-briefs/efficiency/mopan-thematic-brief-efficiency-2025.pdf> (accessed on 12 August 2025).
- [27] MOPAN (2025), *Mapping of Multilateral Organisations' Response to the Current Funding Environment*, <https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/performance-insights/multilateral-effectiveness-in-a-shifting-landscape/mapping-thematic-brief.html>.
- [5] MOPAN (2025), *Multilateral Effectiveness in a Shifting Landscape*, <https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/performance-insights/multilateral-effectiveness-in-a-shifting-landscape.html> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [7] MOPAN (2023), *Progress on PSEAH? From Words to Deeds*, <https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/performance-insights/pseah.html> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [9] MOPAN (2022), *MOPAN Adapted Framework for MOs*, <https://www.mopan.org/content/dam/mopan/en/publications/our-work/methods/mopan-crisis-framework.pdf>.
- [8] MOPAN (2022), *Rethinking Effective Humanitarian Organisations*, <https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/performance-insights/rethinking-effective-humanitarian-organisations.html> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [36] OCHA (2025), *Accountability to Affected People*, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/report-accountability-affected-people-ocha-evaluation-report-20-july-2025> (accessed on 14 August 2026).
- [32] OCHA (2025), *CERF at the forefront of Anticipatory Action*, https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF_Atforefront_AA.pdf (accessed on 12 August 2026).

- [2] OCHA (2025), *Global Humanitarian Overview 2026*, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2026-enaesfr> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [3] OECD (2026), *A historic decline in foreign aid: Preliminary 2025 ODA data*.
- [34] Pearson, M. and N. Rieger (2026), *The state of international humanitarian funding to local and national actors*, https://media.odi.org/documents/HST-LHL_localistion_report_final.pdf (accessed on 14 August 2026).
- [4] Rieger, N. et al. (2024), *Falling short? Humanitarian funding and reform*, https://devinit.org/files/documents/1506/falling_short_humanitarian_funding_and_reform.pdf (accessed on 13 August 2026).
- [10] State, U. (2026), *United States Pledges Additional \$1.8 Billion in Life-Saving Humanitarian Funding to OCHA's Humanitarian Reset & Shares Powerful Results from the Trump Administration's UN Humanitarian Reform Agreement*, <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/05/united-states-pledges-additional-1-8-billion-in-life-saving-humanitarian-funding-to-ochas-humanitarian-reset-shares-powerful-results-from-the-trump-administrations-un-humanita> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [38] Steets, J. and J. Lehmann (2021), *Evaluation of UNHCR's Engagement in Humanitarian-Development Cooperation*, <https://www.unhcr.org/in/sites/en-in/files/legacy-pdf/61af7be94.pdf> (accessed on 13 August 2026).
- [23] Swithern, S. and A. Obrecht (2025), *Prioritising humanitarian resources: how*, ODI Global, https://alnap.hacdn.io/media/documents/Prioritisation_Paper_v6.pdf (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [11] U.S. Department of State (2026), *United States Announces More Than \$1 Billion in Assistance to UNICEF and World Food Program to Address Global Humanitarian Needs*, <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/06/united-states-announces-more-than-1-billion-in-assistance-to-unicef-and-world-food-program-to-address-global-humanitarian-needs> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [12] U.S. Department of State (2026), *United States Announces More Than \$200 Million in Humanitarian Assistance to the ICRC and IFRC*, <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/07/united-states-announces-more-than-200-million-in-humanitarian-assistance-to-the-icrc-and-ifrc> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [28] UNDRR (2025), *Concept Note: International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) 2025*, <https://www.undrr.org/media/110376/download?startDownload=20260813> (accessed on 13 August 2026).
- [31] WFP (2025), *WFP's evidence base on Anticipatory Action 2015-2024*, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000166092/download/> (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [14] WFP (2023), *Update to the management plan (2024–2026)*, https://executiveboard.wfp.org/document_download/WFP-0000157985 (accessed on 12 August 2026).
- [19] WFP (2019), *World Food Programme begins partial suspension of aid in Yemen*, <https://www.wfp.org/news/world-food-programme-begins-partial-suspension-aid-yemen> (accessed on 12 August 2026).

[26] WFP Executive Board (2026), *Audite annual accountrs 2025*, https://executiveboard.wfp.org/document_download/WFP-0000173331 (accessed on 12 August 2026).

[29] WFP Executive Board (2024), *Update on the implementation of WFP's cash policy*, https://executiveboard.wfp.org/fr/document_download/WFP-0000161580 (accessed on 12 August 2026).

[39] World Bank (2025), *An Evaluation of the World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence, 2020-25*, <https://doi.org/10.1596/IEG206395> (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[45] World Bank (2023), *United Nations – World Bank Group Partnership in Crisis-affected Situations*, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/16778-wb_2022_un-wb_partnership-web.pdf (accessed on 14 August 2026).

[46] World Bank (2021), *World Bank Engagement in Situations of Conflict: An Evaluation of FY10–20 Experience.*, <https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/Evaluation/files/SituationsofConflict.pdf> (accessed on 13 August 2026).

[18] World Bank Group (2020), *World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020–2025*, <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/844591582815510521/pdf/World-Bank-Group-Strategy-for-Fragility-Conflict-and-Violence-2020-2025.pdf> (accessed on 15/09/2026).

www.mopan.org



Secretariat@mopan.org



