

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

HOPE & HUMANITY



BOARD PREFACE

We are delighted to present our 2023 Federation Annual Report which highlights some of our collective successes, missed opportunities, and lessons for the future from the 72 countries where ActionAid has a footprint directly or through partnerships.

As the world continued to heat up, with both climate related increased temperatures and heated conflict and increased polarisation of peoples and attitudes, ActionAid has had to redouble efforts to continue to be effective. We have been able to do so because of our increased stability and internal cohesion.

During the year we have seen ActionAid develop and refine a vision for what *transformative programming* will mean in practice, emphasising external engagement, consolidating our new climate justice campaign, and advancing our renewed aspiration to become a rooted campaign with a strong constituency base. Through a recently developed social justice leadership program, we are determined to nurture the leadership required to deliver this vision. We will continue to deepen our work with social movements that we believe are essential players in the transnational effort to achieve systems change for climate justice, economic justice, women's rights, and feminist alternatives.

To enable this transformation, the Global Leadership Team (GLT) developed a *finance, funding, and sustainability vision* that the International Board endorsed at its meeting in December 2023. This vision recognises that becoming a rooted campaign organisation with a strong constituency base requires *long-term unrestricted income* for greater independence. However, we also need to *prioritise institutional income growth* in the short to medium term, for critical work at the country level, as well as budget-relieving prospects.

Alongside sustainability, we also committed to *deepening the political imperatives of internationalisation* and taking this forward by making ActionAid more *feminist, anti-racist, and decolonial*. This will be our next leap and shape the Federation's ways of working.

This Annual Report shows a snapshot of the federation's work in 2023, the things we are proud to have achieved, and where we have more to do. It shows how ActionAid has become increasingly engaged in external global spaces, particularly related to our Climate Justice Campaign.

Alongside our stories' map, it shows the breadth and depth of our work, and the potential role that ActionAid can play, working together with partners and allies in 72 countries across the globe.¹

Solidarity,

Hellen Grace Akwii and Gino Govender

AAI BOARD CHAIR and VICE-CHAIR

On Behalf of the ActionAid International Board



Hellen Grace Akwii



Gino Govender

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CONTEXT

ActionAid continues to advance its mission around the world despite growing challenges to humanity.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report in 2023 made it clearer than ever that we need to act now, or it will be too late. As UN secretary general, António Guterres, said: “Our world needs climate action on all fronts: everything, everywhere, all at once.” He also noted that “the era of global boiling has arrived.” July 2023 marked the hottest month in the world ever, and the impact of the climate crisis was felt everywhere: from the fires in southern Europe to a winter heatwave in South America. Climate-induced emergencies such as the East Africa Drought continued to wreak havoc on the most vulnerable, Asia and the Pacific saw the highest death toll due to extreme weather and subsequent disasters, whilst Cyclone Freddy battered southern Africa and floods inundated numerous countries.

The wars in Sudan, DRC, Ethiopia, Ukraine and Yemen continued, with devastating impacts on lives and livelihoods in those countries. The number of refugees continued to rise worldwide, while backlashes against women’s rights and human rights risked rolling back decades of progress. The appalling war in Gaza that began in October 2023 caused devastating civilian casualties, with women and children bearing the brunt. These geo-political wars are fuelling a new arms race which is resulting into a shift of significant resources away from development goals.

In 2023, democracy was in crisis. Ultranationalist, neoliberal, racist, macho and religious fundamentalist narratives are gaining more space in public opinion, influencing more groups in society with negative impacts on public policies, gender equality and societal behaviour.

The influence of big corporates also continued to expand, concentrating wealth and knowledge in the hands of a small global elite that escapes most accountability mechanisms. Meanwhile, at least 54 countries were in debt crisis in 2023, which is accelerating the climate crisis as countries are forced to earn foreign currency quickly through extracting fossil fuels and investing in industrial agriculture. Debt also empowers the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with 143 countries enforcing cuts to public spending, undermining public services that are struggling to recover after Covid. Women continue to bear the brunt of both the climate crisis and economic instability. Women and children are 14 times more likely to die from climate disasters than men and they are the first to lose their jobs and access to public services when crisis strikes, as well as being forced to assume the increased burden of unpaid care work.

Individual and corporate wealth is concentrated in ever fewer hands. Our [joint research with Oxfam](#) revealed that 722 big corporations made over \$1 trillion in excess profits in 2021 and 2022 on the back of soaring energy and food prices. Whilst 2023 saw the World Bank/IMF’s first annual meeting in Africa for 50 years, the discussions at Marrakech signalled no real change in practice and neoliberal economics remain in the ascendancy, despite some shifts in rhetoric.

But 2023 showed signs of hope; people’s power and resistance remain alive. There is a growing convergence of movements who see their struggles as inter-connected and who continued to challenge local, national and global power injustices, despite shrinking space and increasing criminalisation. Global mobilisation to stop the war in Gaza was extraordinary. We also witnessed some wins by civil society, such as shifting global tax policy making from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to the UN, progress on establishing the Loss & Damage Fund, and even a commitment to reduce fossil fuel usage from COP28 in Dubai. These successes demonstrate what people power can deliver. And, combined with a growing recognition that economic justice, climate justice and gender justice are fundamentally interconnected, ActionAid and its partners and allies are part of 2023 heralding new hope.

On 13 September, ActionAid Malawi launched the “Fund Our Future” Climate Justice Campaign, mobilising the youth, young women and climate change activists, social movements and collectives to call for Malawi to shift from industrial agriculture to agroecology. This came months after the country was hit by the longest lasting cyclone on record - Cyclone Freddy - which claimed over 1000 lives, displaced 563,771 and destroyed over 220,000 farmers’ fields and crops, and damaged infrastructure across southern Malawi.

PHOTO: FLETCHER SIMWAKA / ACTIONAID



IMPACT **ActionAid in numbers²**

Our global federation exists to harness individual and collective work to achieve social justice and gender equality and eradicate poverty. Central in our drive to achieve our mission in 2023 were 3,123 staff (1,447 women and 1,676 men), and we had presence in 75 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and The Americas, supported by a Global Secretariat of 126 (78 women and 48 men). Of our staff, 50.4% of our senior leaders are women. We worked with 3,165 partners of which 817 were social movements, 729 were networks/coalitions, 944 were women's rights/women led organisations, and 581 were organisations led by young people.

Countries reported reaching 23.4 million people in our campaigns, including 10.4 million women, 8.9 million men and 4.1 million children.

Our overall humanitarian work reached 7.3 million people, including 2 million women, 1.7 million men, 3.6 million children.

25
AFFILIATES

Full members, legally registered as national organisations, autonomous and self-governed

Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Tanzania, The Gambia, Uganda, UK, USA.

5
ASSOCIATES

Members in transition to Affiliates

Indonesia, Spain, Thailand, Vietnam, Zambia.

15
COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

Programmes with managerial oversight provided by the International Board

Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Myanmar, Palestine, Senegal, Somalia, Somaliland, South Africa, Zimbabwe.

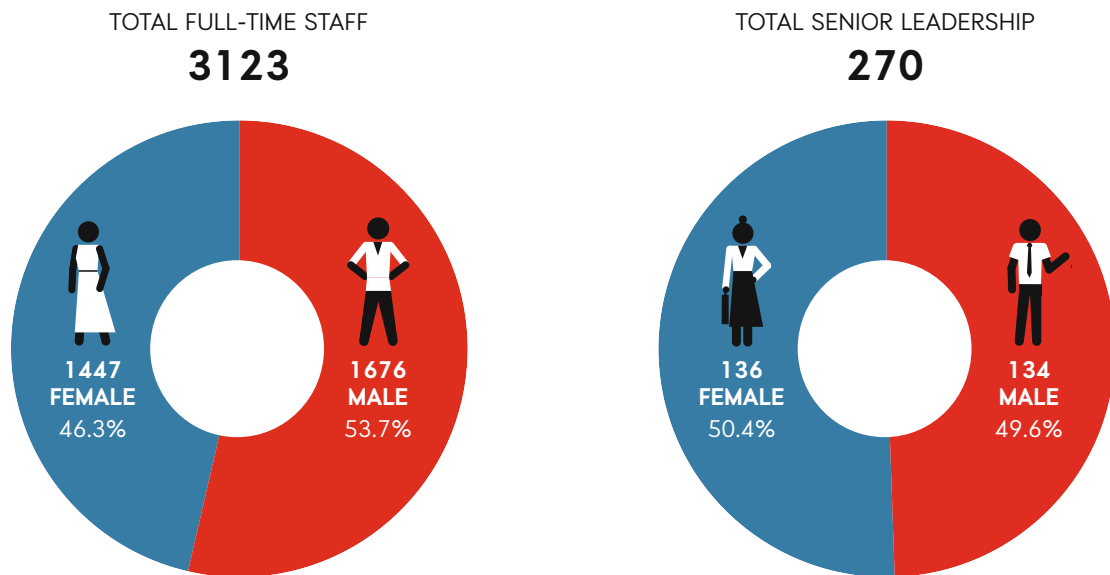
30
PRESENCES

Presence through partners, or through offshoots and satellites of existing country presences with a regional remit.

Bolivia, Cyprus, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Jordan, Lebanon, Mali, Mauritania, Moldova, Morocco, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Sudan, Switzerland, Syria, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Vanuatu, Vatican, Yemen.

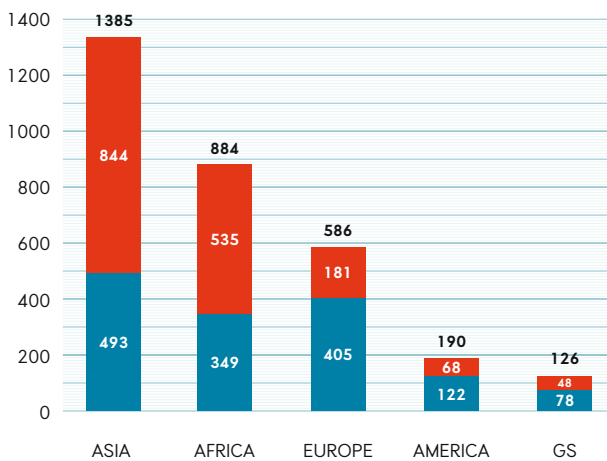
Staff

Federation staff information – all countries and Global Secretariat (GS):

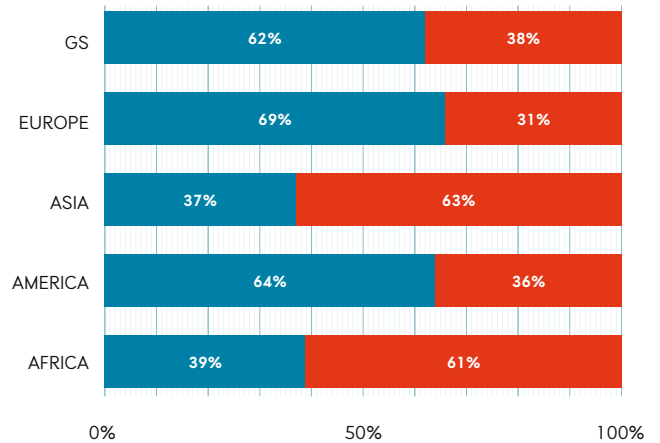


Staff division per region

NUMBER OF FEMALE AND MALE STAFF PER REGION



% OF FEMALE AND MALE STAFF PER REGION



● Female staff ● Male staff

Partners: 2978 – International: 457 – Local: 2708



817

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS



729

NETWORKS / COALITIONS



581

YOUNG-PEOPLE
LED ORGANISATIONS

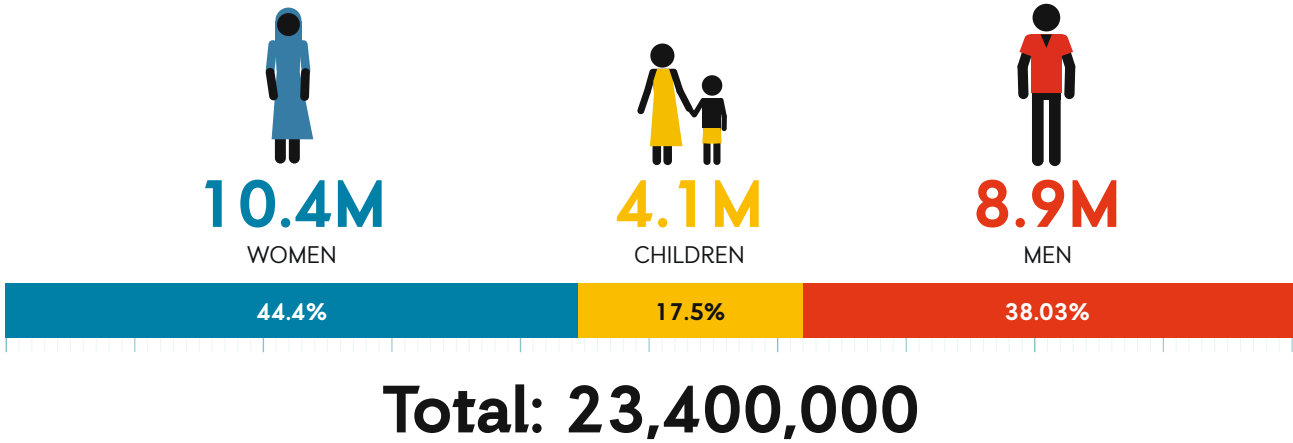


944

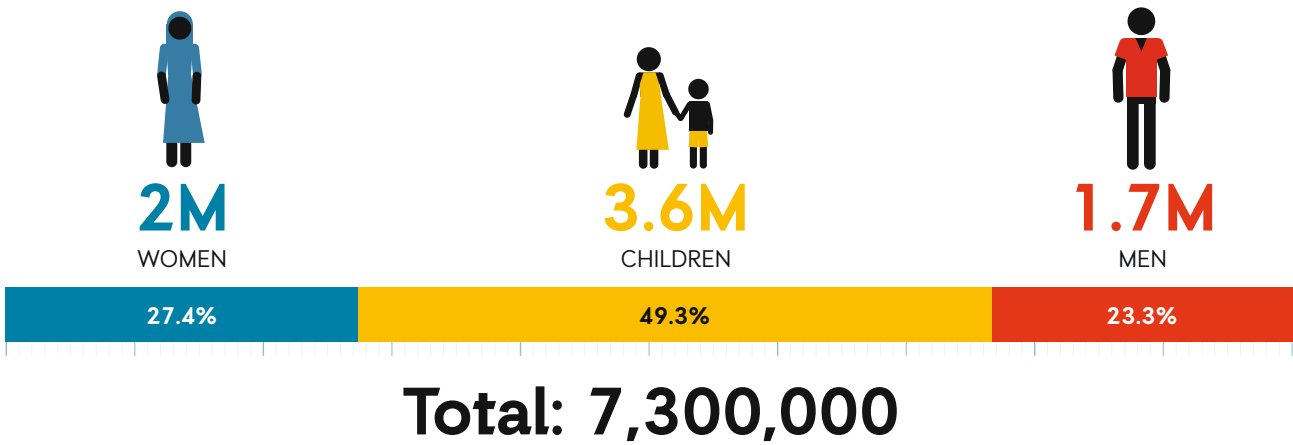
WOMEN'S RIGHTS /
LED ORGANISATIONS

Reach

Reach: by campaigns



Reach: by humanitarian assistance



Reach: children targeted by empowerment activities

1,500,000 



A 'Fill the Fund' demonstration at COP28 in Dubai.
PHOTO: JESS MIDWINTER / ACTIONAID

Cross-cutting international and regional policy and advocacy

Alongside our work with partners and allies in communities, we have connected with key movements and allies and used our access to global spaces to raise voices from the grassroots with an aim to shift power in key international processes. This approach has succeeded in influencing UN COP climate negotiations (especially on loss and damage), the Commission on the Status of Women, the IMF and World Bank Spring and annual meetings, the UN Binding Treaty negotiations and global processes on education following the Transforming Education Summit.

We also continued active engagement with key allies including Gender is My Agenda (GIMAC), the International Association of Feminist Economists (IAFFE), the Climate Action Network, the End Austerity Alliance, Global Alliance for Tax Justice, Eurodad, Our Future is Public, Global Campaign for Education and the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation (ICRICT).

Our multi-country projects – especially Young Urban Women, Tax Ed Alliance, Combatting Modern Slavery, Peoples Vaccine Alliance, SETA Anti-Racism and Partnership for Social Accountability – have played a particularly important role in keeping us connected, even at a time our core unrestricted funding and capability was reduced.

In 2023, we set out to build stronger links between our work on economic justice, climate justice and women’s rights. We made good progress, with powerful cross-cutting analysis in *The Vicious Cycle* and strong economic justice messaging in our flagship climate justice work, *How the Finance Flows: the banks fuelling the climate crisis* as well as a convergence of feminist macro-economics and a feminist just transition and care agenda. Building on learning from 2022, we are translating this growing convergence into practical resources and deepening and strengthening connections between federation members.

IMF Spring meetings: Colleagues from across the federation attended the IMF and World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington DC from 10-17 April, in

person and online. ActionAid released a [briefing](#) on the connections between the debt crisis and the climate crisis, which was widely disseminated and covered by over 30 print media outlets around the world, building momentum for change.

SBSTA Climate Negotiations in Bonn: ActionAid worked with partners and allies at technical UN climate talks in Bonn in June, to raise communities' voices to influence key outcomes on climate finance, agriculture, adaptation and to prevent greenwashing. This work was influential in shifting positions in the Climate Action Network, who have subsequently been stronger in rejecting loan-based finance and calling for debt cancellation.

New Global Financial Pact Summit in Paris: As a follow-up to [The Vicious Cycle](#) briefing released around the IMF Spring meetings, ActionAid and partners engaged with The New Global Financial Pact Summit hosted by President Macron in Paris, successfully exposing the link between debt, climate vulnerability and fossil fuels, to increase pressure for debt relief, and to [call for scaling up of real climate finance](#). These efforts have been particularly effective in re-shaping civil society's broader understanding of the issues.

EU-CELAC Summit: The EU-CELAC Summit took place in July, where it became evident that the EU prioritises promoting private sector European

investments in the ecological and digital transition of Latin America. ActionAid worked with partners to actively support an agenda focused on Economic and Climate Justice.

COP28 UN climate negotiations: ActionAid and partners attended COP28 negotiations in Dubai in December 2023, and worked with allies to successfully bring strategic policy, media and campaigning pressure on key policy areas of loss and damage, climate finance, agriculture, ending fossil fuels, adaptation and challenging carbon markets. The report [European Finance Flows fuelling the climate crisis: The role of Article 2.1c under the UNFCCC](#), linked our climate justice campaign agenda to COP negotiations by drawing attention to the need to stop climate-harming finance flows. Two historic milestones were achieved at COP28, the establishment of the long-fought-for Loss and Damage Fund to help communities recover from climate disasters, and the call on countries to transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems. These are powerful tools that we will continue to lever for further action. The team's collective efforts also achieved extremely effective media coverage, including at least 1,000 articles published over the period that either quoted ActionAid or referenced our research and work which will help to galvanise a strong campaign base and influence discourse around these key issues.

Climate justice

Our work on climate justice centres the perspectives, needs and solutions of the communities we work with, to protect the rights and resilience of those on the front lines of the climate crisis and to hold the biggest polluting governments and corporations to account. From scaling up agroecology and resilience to climate impacts, resisting polluting extractives and land-grabbing carbon offsets, to demanding

scaled-up public funds and climate finance and just feminist transitions, and stopping finance flows to the causes of climate change, the federation's programme, policy and campaigns on climate justice are interconnected and complementary. We know that people power is how we make change, and our collective approach is designed to ensure that decision makers at all levels hear the women, youth and communities at the heart of our work.

Human costs of the food crisis

ActionAid's 15 country-wide collaborative research with partners uncovered the costs of global food and fuel price rises felt by local communities in 2023. The data collected showed that rural areas are experiencing far steeper price rises than already-shocking national averages, and that women and girls are disproportionately affected. [*The Human Costs of the Food Crisis 2023*](#) report was released in June and [published](#) in global media outlets. The findings are being used as evidence for advocacy for social protection policies. The [powerful film](#) that tells this story has also been nominated as a finalist for an upcoming charity film award.

Surveys in Bangladesh highlighted specific vulnerabilities, as communities face converging crises exacerbated by a climate crisis that is growing in ferocity. Fifty seven per cent of women surveyed in Bangladesh in 2023 said they are now in debt because of the current situation. The effects of these crises have reduced women and girls' access to food and education and increased instances of child marriage and gender-based violence. Together, these negative impacts have taken a massive toll on women and girls' mental health. Rina, a mother and agricultural worker from Manjupara, Bangladesh, comments on ActionAid partner's agroecology training. She said,

"I've learned how to collect fresh water [...] We grew a lot of crops with fresh water. It's helped us a lot."



PHOTO: JESS MIDWINTER / ACTIONAID
FILM: DAN JUKES / ACTIONAID

Daniel, Maria José and María Alejandra from the Gran Cumbal region. They are part of the Colombia Indigenous Guard which takes care of the paramo, one of the world's most important eco-systems. To mark Nature, Land Use, and Oceans Day at COP28, a film featuring the stories of three generations of activists on the frontline of the climate crisis was played at CoP: [The Environmental Indigenous Guard - Colombia's Páramos](#)



PHOTO: LILIANA MERIZALDE / ACTIONAID

Climate justice campaign

We reflect on a year marked by accomplishments and challenges. In 2023, the Campaign Steering Group (GSG) and Global Leadership Team (GLT) convened in Bangladesh to shape ActionAid's global campaign on climate justice. Together they decided to develop a locally rooted campaign, focusing on international and national targets, combating the environmental impact of fossil fuels and industrial agriculture projects.

After initial preparations and collaboration across the federation, the campaign kicked off internally with the Festival of Learning in April, where the campaign name, Fund Our Future, was unveiled. Our objective is clear: we aim to encourage private banks and public funding to stop financing fossil fuels and harmful industrial agribusiness. We advocate for grassroots renewable energy and agroecology solutions. Our primary focus is to collaborate with grassroots movements to empower women's leadership in combating the climate crisis. We are mobilising millions of people to encourage the

public and private sectors to redirect investments towards sustainable practices.

In May, Executive and Country Directors and colleagues engaged in programming in Africa came together to shape and contextualise the campaign for the region. The soft launch took place on 5 June, World Earth Day, connecting with external allies to emphasise the importance of a healthy environment. More than 14 countries contributed with actions and initiatives online and on the ground.



Young artists in Nepal paint artworks themed around climate change in a busy public area. This event was part of a youth Climate Camp in Bangladesh. PHOTO: ACTIONAID

The official launch on 4 September 2023, in Nairobi, was timed with our flagship report [How the Finance Flows: the banks fuelling the climate crisis](#) which released alarming new data on how private banks are financing fossil fuel and industrial agriculture industries in the Global South. The launch took place at the Africa People's Climate Assembly in Nairobi, as part of Africa Climate Week and the Africa Climate Summit. The campaign brought together hundreds of grassroots activists and inspired several countries to launch their own national campaigns.

The campaign momentum reached its peak in September, with over 400,000 people participating in the Global Climate Actions Week, engaging in diverse initiatives such as art events, marches, youth festivals, and digital campaigns. The coordinated efforts showcased the power of collaboration between the federation and global platforms, echoing voices of youth for climate justice.

As Fund Our Future entered its second phase, the focus shifted to storytelling, exposing the real-life tragedies behind the environmental and humanitarian devastation caused by banks funding fossil fuels. The documentary *S(hell)* portrayed the aftermath of Shell's activities in the Erhoboro community in Delta State in Nigeria, emphasising the human toll of exploitation. Shell receives money from HSBC, Barclays and CitiGroup. Several ActionAid offices in countries where these banks are headquartered have been strengthening collaborations with allies to step up pressure against Shell funders through campaigning and advocacy.

The year concluded with a focus on COP28's impact on the planet's future and its inhabitants, recognising the ongoing efforts to address climate finance.

Finegirl, a farmer with an oil well on her family's land in Erhoboro, Delta State, Nigeria, paints a bleak picture of the community's deteriorating health and wellbeing. She said, "Shell's actions have made it abundantly clear that the lives of Erhoboro residents hold no significance to them." ActionAid is calling on Shell to commit to the elimination of gas flaring. This should be accompanied by compensation to address issues raised in this film and community development initiatives to restore agricultural productivity and local economies. PHOTO: DAN JUKES/ACTIONAID





Two smallholder farmers in Ulaya village, Kilosa district, Tanzania, showing the demonstration plot they have cultivated using agroecology in collaboration with local government. Support was provided by MVIWAMORO, a not-for-profit organisation based in Morogoro, Tanzania, and ActionAid Tanzania. PHOTO: DAN JUKES/ACTIONAID

International projects

The Scaling Up Public Investment in Agriculture (SUPIA) project continues to work with farmers' organisations in Nigeria and at regional levels hold regional and national policy makers to account to increase expenditure on agriculture, especially agroecology and gender-responsiveness. Women smallholder farmers participated at the 5th Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) events in Nairobi in July 2023, presenting a charter of demands. The African Union (AU) theme for 2023 was "Accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)," the world's largest free trade area. SUPIA also supported women farmers' engagement and influence in the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP).

The Partnership for Social Accountability (PSA) Alliance consortium project completed its four-year second phase in June 2023. While the project was phased out of Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique, it will continue activities in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and the Southern Africa regional level, until December 2024, focused on empowering smallholder farmers

and youth on issues of social accountability in agriculture, agroecology and sexual and reproductive health. In phase two, 8,048 people across five countries were supported to participate in political processes to influence public service provision at district level, resulting in 61% of the issues raised being addressed by government.

Economic justice

Our economic justice work is rooted in research and advocacy across 25 countries, and over 30 colleagues and partners joined our ground-breaking advocacy at the annual IMF meetings in Marrakech. At least 54 countries are in debt crisis and the IMF continued to be in denial of this at their annual meetings in Marrakech, blocking efforts to support a new collective process of debt renegotiation or cancellation. They also deny their role in enforcing austerity policies around the world.

ActionAid's report in October 2023 called out the 'Fifty Years of Failure' of the IMF and there is a growing convergence of movements that call for fundamental reform, including climate and economic

justice movements, unions, feminist movements and public service activists. ActionAid's argument for system change is more relevant than ever. With a rising tide of anti-French sentiment in Africa, we are also seeing increased acknowledgement of the inherently colonial nature of the IMF and World Bank.

The [SETA anti-racist public education project](#) has already [transformed perceptions of racism in Brazil](#) through a powerful group of national partners. In 2023, we continued to build relationships with anti-racist education initiatives in other countries to collectively define key concepts and develop a wider movement to change global policy and practice.



One of the SETA project's initiatives; a panel of black and indigenous communication activists discuss how to achieve anti-racist communication on the news agenda at Folha de São Paulo newspaper, São Paulo, Brazil. PHOTO: ERECIN E CRIMEIRAO, INSTITUTO PEREGUM / ACTIONAID

ActionAid's innovative Tax and Education Alliance project received confirmation of a further \$1 million in funding from the Global Partnership for Education, enabling this groundbreaking work to continue through to June 2026 together with movements. We released new research in collaboration with Oxfam in July 2023 showing the transformative potential of [windfall taxes](#), showing that 722 mega-corporations raked in \$1 trillion a year in windfall profits in 2021 and 2022 and a windfall tax of 90% on last years' windfall profits could generate \$941 billion each year. We also published an influential research report, [Breaking out of the Bubble to Transform Education Financing](#), following up on the finance agenda we laid out at the UN 2022 Transforming Education Summit and showing how action on tax, debt and austerity could transform public education systems.

Women's rights and feminist alternatives

ActionAid worked with partners and allies to engage and influence in multiple strategic external spaces, including the 67th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women on the theme of innovation, technology and the digital age, at which we shared initial findings from our report on [women's rights in the global gig economy](#). At the Rebuilding the Social Organisation of Care (RSOC) Coalition, we launched a [Charter of Feminist Demands](#) from the Global South on Digital Futures and a [Declaration of Feminist Digital Justice](#).

ActionAid deepened its work on corporate accountability for women's rights in 2023. We saw strategic gains working alongside the Feminists for a Binding Treaty coalition and the Treaty Alliance to push for increased State and CSO engagement in negotiations for a legally binding UN instrument on transnational corporation and human rights.

We co-convened an African Binding Treaty Indaba in South Africa and the first ever Africa Regional Intersessional Consultation on the UN Binding Treaty in Accra to generate input into the design of this legally binding instrument.

Additionally, we organised sessions at the African Business and Human Rights Forum in Addis Ababa, where we drew the connections between the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), trade liberalisation and women's rights, including the potential impact to women of rising corporate power, which can lead to cuts in public services, precarious jobs, forced labour and trafficking and increased care burdens.

We continued our biannual engagement with the African Union through our main partner, the Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC). Our objective continues to be to infuse a stronger system-change narrative in the conversations on gender equality on the continent and to platform feminist economic alternatives related to care, women's labour and addressing structural violence.

International projects

Young Urban Women and Valuing Women's Work Program

ActionAid's Young Urban Women: Life Choices and Livelihoods (YUW) offered strategic support and opportunities for young urban women living in poverty and exclusion, enabling them to mobilise and amplify their voices to advocate for innovative systems-change approaches with local and national governments – in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and Malawi, as well as with International Financial Institutions (IFIs). To date, the programme has mobilised over 19,000 young urban women in 29 cities, nurtured them through feminist political education and feminist movement-building processes, enabling successful evidence-based and impactful collective activism in environmental, social and economic justice.

At Global level, the programme has continued to support Young Urban Women's global movement

building and coordination actions. Engagements have been timed around the 16 Days of Activism, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), meetings of the IMF and World Bank, IAFFE, African Union Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC), and the Generation Equality process. A key event was the [Global Convening of Young Urban Women Movements](#) held in Kenya. This served as a Feminist Political School, bringing together young women activists and allies from different countries under the theme of 'Mobilizing for Feminist Futures in Multiple Crises and the Digital Age'.

The programme has instigated tangible policy and program changes at national and global levels. This provided opportunities for young women, academics, organisations, and activists worldwide to learn and contribute their perspectives, allowing them to co-create and explore political alternatives and economic scenarios that prioritise care. The [policy paper on Transitioning to a Feminist Wellbeing Economy in Malawi and Beyond](#) is a testament to this, setting out the path for a just future.

Lerato is a member of Young Urban Women, Blantyre, Malawi, and a passionate advocate for change. The Young Urban Women project builds the active agency of young women living in poverty. Through empowerment, campaigning and solidarity work, it addresses women's sexual health and reproductive rights, and right to work. Lerato says,

"Yes, I do feel hopeful. Why? Because I am not staying. I am doing something. I'm advocating for change ... maybe [it will happen] next year or even in six months. People can hear my voice. There's a big future in me coming, which I have to fight for it"



PHOTO: THOKO CHIKONDI / ACTIONAID

In its final year, the Combatting Modern Slavery in Ethiopia and Ghana project worked to address the current issues and structural causes of modern slavery by highlighting the links between gender discrimination, poverty and modern slavery. ActionAid Ghana, in collaboration with the Ghana Agricultural Workers' Union, community-based anti-modern slavery teams (or COMBATS) and the Anti-Human Trafficking Department of the Ghana Police Force identified, rescued and returned over 30 survivors of human trafficking, as explained further in this short video.

In 2023, ActionAid Ethiopia and partners supported hundreds of women to rebuild their lives after harrowing experiences of domestic servitude. The work outlined in this video explains why governments need to ratify ILO Convention 189, a law protecting domestic workers from abuse, harassment and violence. On 30 July, the project team marked World Day Against Human Trafficking by publishing policy briefs outlining the urgent need to regulate businesses in Ethiopia and Ghana to uphold women's right to decent work and to tackle child labour and other forms of modern slavery.

In October 2023, ActionAid collaborated with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to produce a Future of Work podcast, and – with additional support from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Africa – hosted a virtual, multi-stakeholder dialogue on the ratification and domestication of ILO Convention 190.

Also in October, the project team worked with the Government of Ghana to organise a regional intersessional forum, bringing together representatives from 16 African states to discuss how best to engage in annual negotiations for a UN Binding Treaty on business and human rights, resulting in the development of an African Position paper. A video from Ghana and an animation were produced to raise awareness of the issues.

Later in the month, representatives from Ethiopia and Ghana joined a federation-wide delegation in Geneva, working alongside strategic partners such as the Feminists for a Binding Treaty, to lobby for the inclusion of feminist perspectives in the text and to ensure that adequate protection is afforded to the rights of women, minorities and the environment.

Betina Charlie is the Ground Coordinator and President of the Women I Tok Tok Tugeta (WITTT) Network in Malo, Vanuatu. It was challenging to get the network off the ground. She says, 'Where I came from, it's an area that experiences attitudes such as violence against women... The women do not have the free time to do things or feel they cannot do things they want. The patriarchal system makes the women feel they were not free to do things.' However, with ActionAid's support, women from different villages meet regularly and are seeking livelihoods solutions, for example in communal gardening. Betina found the Women Led Preparedness Training incredibly helpful and in Cyclones Judy and Kevin in March 2023, the women were able to support other communities with food they have grown. She says, 'they have [WITTT] totally changed their [men's] mentality. It drove away any doubts they have concerning what we were doing. They now come around to offer to help and support us.'

PHOTO: CLARE DOUGLAS / ACTIONAID



HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES, RECOVERY, RESILIENCE BUILDING, & INFLUENCING

Our responses

Of the 7.3 million crisis-affected people reached through humanitarian assistance by the federation in 2023, ActionAid's International Humanitarian and Resilience Team (IHART) supported countries in reaching 4.5 million people in our Red and Orange alerts and other major responses. This support was in over 40 specific responses in 28 countries globally. Of these countries, 22 were experiencing new crises, and six were protracted crisis responses.³

Across the responses, ActionAid prioritised implementing partners at local and national levels – demonstrating our commitment to locally led responses, shifting power and resources to crisis affected communities, and prioritising women, young people (especially young women), and their organisations. The responses met immediate needs and early recovery, resilience building, and technical, operational and advocacy support.

Below is the breakdown in ActionAid's major humanitarian responses.

Elizabeth, 21 is a youth leader with ActionAid's partner Community Transformation Agenda (CoTA) Uganda. Elizabeth came to Uganda from South Sudan in 2017 at the age of 15 and lives in Imvepi refugee settlement. Over 1.5 million refugees and 50,000 asylum seekers live in Uganda, making it one of the world's largest refugee hosting nations. ActionAid Uganda has been working in the Kiryandongo, Rhino and Imvepi refugee settlements, supporting community partners who hold workshops for girls aged 9-19 on leadership, girls' rights, forced child marriage, sexual and reproductive health and how to make reusable sanitary pads. Elizabeth says: "When girls know their rights, it protects them from many forms of abuse."

PHOTO: ESTHER MBABAZI / ACTIONAID



Breakdown in ActionAid's major humanitarian responses.

S.N.	Humanitarian Responses	Alert level	Humanitarian reach (Individuals / Households)	Female	Male	Gender Unverified	Children	Assistance Provided
1	Palestine Crisis Response	Red	208,026	105,825	83,820	18,381	–	Hot meals, non-food items, dignity and hygiene kits, WASH support, shelter, and multipurpose cash assistance.
2	Turkey/Syria Earthquake Response	Red	212,001	92,735	69,084	–	74,411	Search and rescue, healthcare, food, shelter, WASH support, non-food items, protection, and cash assistance with a focus on women and girls (over 65%).
3	East Africa Food Crises Response (Kenya, Somaliland, Ethiopia)	Red	513,990	220,357	199,488	94,145	14,832	Food distribution, cash programming, WASH support, nutrition programme, protection, and conflict management services.
4	Ukraine Crisis Response	Orange	2,029,010	941,676	287,334	800,000	–	The extensive response to the Ukraine crisis has encompassed several areas, including Moldova, Poland and Romania. Services provided include information services on protection and gender-based violence, food vouchers, food and non-food items, WASH support, education and health support, and psychosocial support.
5	Tropical Cyclone Freddy (Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe)	Orange	73,672	43,867	27,105	2,700	54,750	Multipurpose cash, food packages, dignity and hygiene kits, education support, tents and shelter support, and house reconstruction.
6	Morocco Earthquake Response	Orange	4,120	–	–	4,120	–	Food, dignity kits, WASH support, comprehensive protection services, shelter, and recreational activities for children.
7	Cyclone Mocha Response (Myanmar, Bangladesh)	Orange	35,722	9,435	6,290	19,997	–	Cash-based support.
8	Afghanistan 2023 Earthquake	No Alert level	1,788 households	–	–	–	–	Livelihood support, protection services, rights awareness raising, education support, food packages, psychosocial support, multipurpose cash, and cash for livelihood support and food.
9	Afghanistan Civil Unrest	Orange	1,174,519	595,241	579,278	–	655,795	Cash assistance, WASH support, psychosocial support, rights awareness raising, health and education support.
10	Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response	Orange	20,176	15,505	4,671	–	–	Multi-purpose cash, in-kind food support, protection services, facilitated access to healthcare, and mitigating increased risk of GBV, mitigating risk for children / elderly / persons with disabilities.
11	Nepal Earthquake Response	No Alert level	9,047	680	–	–	–	Blankets, PU foam sets, warm clothes, and nutrition top-up packs.
12	Sudan Crisis Response	No Alert level	13,500	13,500	–	–	–	WASH support, emergency shelter, SGBV awareness raising programmes, psychosocial support, advocacy, and protection services.
13	Haiti Crisis Response	No Alert level	42,874	21,005	21,869	–	1,016	Food security programmes and leadership and advocacy training for young people, especially young women. Low funding for the ongoing Haiti crisis remains a serious challenge.
14	DRC Crisis Response	No Alert level	345,518	154,976	84,563	114,979	114,979	GBV awareness raising, development of risk prevention and mitigation plans, and women's leadership and advocacy training to put pressure on local authorities to implement disaster mitigation plans.

Humanitarian accountability

ActionAid has applied the Core Humanitarian Standard alongside its Humanitarian Signature, Human Rights Based Approach, Feminist Principles, and a decolonial approach to humanitarian responses, emergency responses, and disaster risk

reduction and preparedness work. This promotes an environment which shifts power to communities during crises. In many cases, cash transfers have been part of the response, giving people affected the flexibility and dignity to cover their basic needs, whilst playing a key role in protecting livelihoods and supporting the local economy.



PHOTO: ACTIONAID

Women and youth-led partners with many years of expertise in humanitarian programming have led the response to the horrific war in Gaza. Their approach emphasises preparedness, localisation, and accountability.^{4, 5, 6} By March 2024, ActionAid and partners had reached 148,518 people with humanitarian aid in Gaza. Of these, 1,163 families received cash transfers, 45,640 people received food distributions, and 60,000 people were reached with health/medical services at Al Nuseirat hospital. In Rafah, 20,000 people have received water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. 2,000 people received shelter in Al Mawasi and Rafah, and 5,500 children had access to education through 'Hope' festivals led by humanitarian youth groups such as partner Palestinian Development Women Studies Association, shown in the photo above.

The federation has worked together to respond; pushing for an immediate ceasefire through the Ceasefire Now campaign joining solidarity and campaigning actions globally and through media campaigns.

In the early stages of the Gaza crisis, we worked with Bisan, a young humanitarian volunteer with ActionAid Palestine, to document and share her experiences firsthand as the crisis unfolded. Bisan was sheltering in Al-Shifa hospital, so she was able to show the distressing and overcrowded conditions and provide realtime information on events.



Bisan reports from Al-Shifa hospital.
PHOTO: BISAN / ACTIONAID

During the Turkey/Syria earthquake, ActionAid partner [Violet](#) was amongst the first responders.^{7, 8} The youth-led organisation formed a rescue team within 72 hours, even before international efforts were coordinated, and this facilitated timely rapid needs assessment and stakeholder mapping.

Jumana, 11, is being supported by ActionAid partner, Violet, at a centre set up as a safe space for women and children affected by the earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria on 6 February 2023. At the safe space, Jumana – along with thousands of other survivors – has been given mental health support, comfort and reassurance and advice on how to stay safe in the aftermath of the earthquake. As local food prices increased by up to 40% following the disaster, Violet also scaled up distributions of food parcels and cash assistance to thousands of vulnerable families. Jumana says,

“Violet helps me in the safe space by educating us, teaching us not to be afraid, and raising our spirits. I feel safe and reassured. We speak freely, and we are not afraid.”



PHOTO: SONYA AL ALI MAARA / ACTIONAID

The East Africa crisis response was an excellent case study in how ActionAid works with local groups, committees and organisations that are women-led and youth-led to address protection issues, conduct recovery programmes and support social cohesion.

Similarly, in Ukraine, ActionAid promoted leadership of marginalised groups that included women, young people, LGBTQIA+ peoples, and Ukrainian refugees in Poland, Moldova and Romania.⁹



PHOTO: ACTIONAID

Founder and members of Kuchnia Konflikty (Conflict Kitchen): a social initiative which aims to support refugees and migrants within Poland to find work by offering fair terms of employment and training, while also working to break down stereotypes.

ActionAid’s feminist approach to protection in emergencies is central to a humanitarian response. As well as ensuring that responses are women-led, community based and holistic, ActionAid and partners look at the intersectional and transformative root causes which will have lasting change.

When the Ukrainian government published its 2022 Recovery Plan, the lack of reference to women’s rights and gender equality was a major concern. ActionAid and partners pushed for placing gender equality and women and young people’s

leadership high on the agenda of European donors supporting the humanitarian response in Ukraine, indirectly influencing the plan. This was achieved by placing Ukrainian women and young people led organisations at the centre of the campaigning and influencing. The work of two of ActionAid's local partner organisations featured in a report which was presented at the European Parliament in Brussels and at events in Ukraine attended by European donors' representatives. This resulted in a well-attended event about gender and reconstruction at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in London, 21-22 June 2023. In 2024, ActionAid will target INGO allies at the new reconstruction conference in Berlin.

In Mozambique, ActionAid collaborated with farmers who have been delivering resilience and protection work in response to the crisis created by Cyclone Freddy.¹⁰ The engagement of community women and youth volunteers also played a crucial role in ensuring the distribution of support in response to an earthquake in Nepal was inclusive and encouraged community participation. While responding to another earthquake in Morocco,^{11, 12, 13} ActionAid collaborated with 14 women's organisations who supported emergency procurements and ensured a localised, gender-responsive approach. And in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), partners documented evidence of ongoing women and girl's protection issues and lobbied local authorities to develop and implement inclusive disaster mitigation plans.

International, Humanitarian and Resilience Team (IHART)'s work

Humanitarian responses were supported by preparedness, recovery, resilience building and advocacy efforts. For example:

Fundraising, EFAST3 & Deployments: ActionAid supported fundraising for the [Feminist Humanitarian Network \(FHN\)](#). In January, 28 people received ActionAid Emergency Fast Action Team (EFAST) training for ActionAid's surge roster, with 17 deployments in 2023.

Global Engagements: In April 2023, members of the [compact for young people in humanitarian action](#) moved their annual meeting from New York to

Jordan, Amman, in a bid to maximise participation of youth from the Global South. In May, ActionAid and partners led an engagement with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) during the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework. They also participated in the Women's Global Forum of the UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Forum – facilitating a session on feminist leadership and self-care in crisis.

At the June 2023 annual [Grand Bargain](#) meeting in Geneva, ActionAid presented a [policy brief](#), detailing feminist perspectives from 32 of ActionAid supported women and youth-led organisations from 14 countries. In October 2023, ActionAid co-hosted a hybrid event at the UN Women Office Headquarters in New York during the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) week; here, panellists from Ukraine, Uganda, Myanmar, and Northwest Syria advocated for crisis-affected women to be better heard for enhanced integration of voices and priorities of crisis affected women into peace and security discussions. In November 2023, IHART attended the [CDAC Annual General Assembly](#) meeting in London and continues to attend the quarterly technical advisory group (TAG) meetings of the [CALP Network](#).¹⁴

Regional Engagements: In May 2023, ActionAid and the FHN co-facilitated a webinar on advancing the feminist agenda in humanitarian co-ordination, hosted by UN Women under their Gender in Humanitarian Action Unit for Central and West Africa. IHART continues to serve as the global host of the Network.

In December, a consultation and strategic planning meeting was held in Zambia with 19 participants for

the establishment of an Africa protection network. The network is to serve as a hub for collaboration and sharing on the protection of women in emergencies. ActionAid co-facilitated a [Charter for Change](#) session on supporting recruitment and retention and well-being of national NGO staff at the annual meeting held in December 2023.

Global Humanitarian Programme – Youth Leadership

in Crisis: ActionAid continued to promote youth leadership in humanitarian contexts. In 2023, ActionAid facilitated young leaders' participation in key events such as the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) youth forum and hosted the Annual Youth Compact meeting in Amman. Through the youth in crisis project, IHART provided technical support to young people in Syria, Nigeria, Palestine, and Lebanon, empowering them with research training and crisis toolkits, to help nurture a new generation of humanitarian leaders.

Learning & Adaptation: IHART supported a federation audit focused on the [Core Humanitarian Standards \(CHS\)](#), continued revising the federation wide Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Handbook, and held consultations with Country/ Executive Directors on establishment of regional humanitarian and resilience fora for collaboration and learning.

Stories from across the federation

This year's annual report is accompanied by a Story Map which is a visual representation of the depth and breadth of our work with partners. Go to www.actionaid.org/stories and enjoy browsing.

Awa Njie, from Kerr Chebo Village The Gambia, says: "my hoe was my only hope". Support for farm equipment, and training on climate resilient sustainable agriculture (CRSA) has helped her to become food secure in spite of erratic and changing weather patterns. As well as supporting women farmers, ActionAid works with social movements to challenge industrial and corporate agriculture, and support women's access to markets.

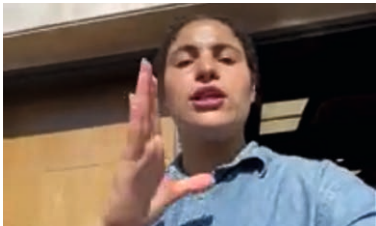
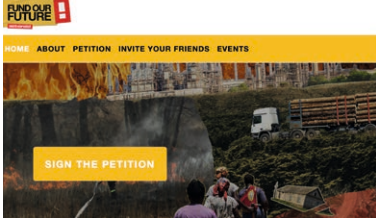


PHOTO: MOHAMED L. TOURAY / ACTIONAID



COMMUNICATIONS

2023 Social media performance: (Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok)

New followers: 72,430 **Impressions:** 6,911,826 **Engagements:** 357,426 **Link clicks:** 53,926 **Engagement rate:** 5.20% **Video views:** 3,268,824

Platform	Link	Impressions	Engagement	Video Views
<p>Instagram</p> <p>Bisan, humanitarian activist with ActionAid Palestine, shares update from Al-Shifa hospital</p>  <p>https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cy3lW0Klle1/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link</p>	208,026	105,825	83,820	
<p>Facebook</p> <p>#FundOurFuture Petition</p>  <p>https://www.facebook.com/474198424739708/posts/687794866713395</p>	212,001	92,735	69,084	
<p>TikTok</p> <p>Young girl rescued by ActionAid's local partner Violet in Northwest Syria</p>  <p>https://www.tiktok.com/@actionaidinternational/video/7198139478626618629?is_from_webapp=1</p>	513,990	220,357	199,488	
<p>YouTube</p> <p>S(hell) Documentary</p>  <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCcmS-foy3Q</p>	2,029,010	941,676	287,334	

2023 Annual media performance

- ActionAid's work with partners was mentioned in over 2800 articles in print, broadcast, and online media in 2023.
- Television broadcast interviews were done with CNN, BBC World Service, BBC Africa, Al Jazeera, and France 24.
- The highest number of articles was achieved during COP28, with over 1,000 mentions. Other key media moments were the Turkey-Syria earthquake, the Food and Fuel Survey report launch, the Fund our Future campaign, the Morocco earthquake, and the Gaza crisis.

Key pieces of coverage

CNN: New climate summit draft calls for transition away from fossil fuels.

The draft "sends a signal that the fossil industry's days are numbered," Teresa Anderson, global climate lead at ActionAid, said in a statement.

France 24: How does aid get into rebel-held northwest Syria?

International organisations also provide funding to aid groups in the northwest to "buy what they need either from the local market or from Turkey through commercial crossings", said Racha Nasreddine of ActionAid.

Euro News: COP27 finally put a loss and damage fund on the map.

"This is a huge responsibility and one that cannot be taken lightly," Brandon Wu, head of policy and campaigns at ActionAid USA said ahead of the meeting. "Defining how the new loss and damage fund will work in practice, including ways it will be governed, is of utmost importance. For far too long developed countries have failed to take responsibility for the overwhelming role they have played in causing the climate crisis."

Al Jazeera: Biden's pick for World Bank president can't fix its crisis.

An Opinion Piece by ActionAid International Secretary General, Arthur Larok

In my role as secretary-general of ActionAid, I will be using a feminist lens to fight for system change. The World Bank needs to make a definitive move away from its support for privatisation and public-private partnerships, learning from the mounting evidence of their harm, particularly the exclusion of women and girls that comes from charging fees.

The New Humanitarian: Morocco earthquake: 'No one is immune to crisis.'

The New Humanitarian's policy editor, Irwin Loy, spoke with Sara Almer, humanitarian director at ActionAid International, about what's happening in Morocco, whose stories are told in emergency responses, and how the aid sector can better prepare.

Reuters: Ghana based aid advocacy groups call for debt cancellation amid crisis.

"The people of Ghana have suffered extensively from the crisis," the groups, which all have operations in Ghana, said in an open letter. "Wealthy private lenders must share in the costs of a crisis they helped to create and cancel the debt."



María De la Cruz Rodríguez has participated in training and exchange sessions with other women, led by ActionAid partner Fundamaya. Fermina Terraza, from Fundamaya says that women's organizing is a means to strengthen women's participation [so they] ... can exercise their rights freely, without violence and discrimination. In solidarity with women like María, ActionAid is part of a campaign "Free to Defend Rights" and tries to raise awareness of the need for women's rights to be part of the Guatemala constitution.

PHOTO: FERMINA TERRAZA / ACTIONAID

CNBC Africa: Africa finance corporation remains committed to fossil fuels.

A report released this week by development charity ActionAid said that banks worldwide gave \$3.2 trillion to the fossil fuel industry in Global South countries in the seven years since the 2015 Paris climate agreement, which agreed to limit global warming to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius by slashing emissions.



GOVERNANCE AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

In 2023, the General Assembly met in Malindi, Kenya where we celebrated 20 years of ActionAid’s internationalisation journey. The General Assembly’s theme was ‘Celebrating Rootedness and Global Solidarity in Internationalisation’ and while in Malindi, we also joined ActionAid International Kenya in celebrating 51 years of serving communities in Kenya as the joint-first Country Program of ActionAid, alongside ActionAid India. Several other leadership meetings took place in June. This included the women’s director’s forum – in which a call, articulated in the Marafa Declaration, was made for ActionAid to better prioritise women’s rights and feminist alternatives across the federation, ensuring it is front and centre in our work.

The International Board, along with the Global Leadership Team, approved the 2024 Global Secretariat and Country Programs Plans and Budgets, and endorsed a proposed Funding, Finance, and Sustainability Vision for the federation to grow income. They also confirmed the appointment of Arthur Larok as Secretary General after a successful probation, and approved the review of ActionAid’s geographic footprint, aimed to provoke strategic reflection how federation presence can have best impact.

The following appointments were made by the Board:

- Gino Govender as Vice Chair of ActionAid International (AAI)
- Allyne Andrade E Silva from Brazil as a member of the AAI Board
- Julia Holm as Convener of Governance and Board Development Committee
- Gino Govender as Convener of the HROD committee

Finally, the International Board agreed as its priorities for 2024:

- overseeing our increased focus on public engagement and external facing work;
- overseeing the development of a transformative program signature;
- ensuring completion of a new resource allocation framework;
- oversee strategy for income growth;
- completing the review of ActionAid’s constitution and membership development process;
- a focus on organisational development especially to ActionAid becoming a more feminist, anti-racist and decolonial organisation.

Organisational effectiveness

People and culture

The focus in 2023 has been on mental health. Trainings were offered to all staff to build awareness and understanding of mental health and its impact in the workplace, and how to create a healthy environment for teams to thrive.

We also conducted bench-marking exercises that played a crucial role in providing information on best practices within the sector. These exercises supported the Policy and Procedures Review, promoting consistency, transparency, and accountability linked to organisational development, and encouraging continuous improvement, knowledge-sharing, and engagement. Analysis was underpinned by creating a system for regular data gathering on human resources / organisational development trends within the Federation.

Child sponsorship

ActionAid's child sponsorship funds reached thousands of children and young people in 2023. For example:

- Community members in **Vietnam** contributed to Green Solutions by planting mangrove trees in shrimp farms, reducing the greenhouse

gasses emitted and supporting projects to harness biogas for use in cooking and daily activities.

- ActionAid **Ghana** distributed over 4,000 dual desks to support government efforts towards addressing the lack of furniture in public schools in the north of the country.
- Leaders of environmental protection groups in Koh Kong, **Cambodia**, were introduced to digital mapping tools to better support patrols and protect local natural resources.
- ActionAid **Senegal**, in collaboration with local partner APROFES and partnership with ActionAid **Hellas**, set up a Resource Center in the LRP of Djilor Saloum to enable communities to meet and hold activities that will contribute to the development of their area.
- ActionAid **Rwanda**, together with women farmer cooperative members, sector leaders and local rights programme residents, promoted the benefits of using organic fertilisers and other agroecological practices.
- ActionAid Bangladesh organised medical health camps across their LRPs, bringing vital healthcare to women and children usually missed by community clinics.

Wema, a student and former chairperson of the children's school council in Chamwino District, Tanzania, raised awareness of issues affecting children with local government and the police representatives for women and children. This year, the local government allocated budget to support the children's council, recognising the children's important work in advocacy, as well as their work in supporting their peers – for example, encouraging reporting of child marriage, violence and supporting girls to continue education. Wema says, "the establishment and strengthening of the children's school council has helped to reduce incidence of child abuse in the community because most of the community members have the knowledge from the community awareness session [that] happened". ActionAid partners have linked the children's school councils with other networks and women's rights groups to ensure increased pressure on the government to address the structural causes of challenges affecting women and girls.



PHOTO: JORAM WIMMO / ACTIONAID

SHEA and safeguarding

ActionAid continues to be actively committed to addressing and preventing incidences of sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse (SHEA) which is carried out by staff and representatives of the organisation. 2023 marked the five-year milestone of

ActionAid's **Global SHEA and Safeguarding strategy**. ActionAid's approach is rooted in survivor-centred and feminist leadership principles, emphasising the importance of acting quickly and decisively when incidents occur across our work, and actively embedded into all Orange and Red Alert emergencies.

Case/Incidences	Number
Did not fall within the SHEA and Safeguarding team's remit/ does not constitute a breach of the SHEA and Safeguarding Policies	44 concerns reported
Categorised as incidents and responded to in line with ActionAid's SHEA and Safeguarding Incident Management Guidelines, which embeds ActionAid's Feminist Leadership Principles	32 concerns reported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 cases of breach of SHEA at Work Policy, 2021 • 8 cases of breaches of PSEA Policy • 2 breaches of the Global Child Safeguarding Policy 2021 • 1 concern classified as "other" which relates to the alleged mishandling of raised SHEA and Safeguarding concerns
Total reported to Global SHEA and Safeguarding Team	76 concerns in total
Incidents closed including numbers for 2021, 2022 and 2023	30 cases were closed in 2023 (11 for 2023, 14 for 22, and 5 for 2021)

ActionAid Liberia can celebrate that 90% of staff completed the e-learning course on SHEA and Safeguarding, a step towards promoting and maintaining a positive SHEA and Safeguarding culture in ActionAid. In total, 1,775 staff across ActionAid have completed the course.

Recognising diverse approaches to managing complaints, ActionAid introduced the Case Supporter Role in November 2023. This role, inspired by the Doula Model of Care and the Survivor's Advocate approach, provides confidential one-to-one support to survivors, complainants, witnesses, and subjects of concern. Ten SHEA and Safeguarding Case Supporters across ActionAid were selected and trained to join a cohort of staff providing support to those affected by SHEA and Safeguarding investigations.



An illustration from ActionAid's SHEA and Safeguarding e-learning course.

Internal audit

During this first year of Internal Audit’s three-year strategic plan (2023-25), audits were held in all countries rated high risk. Internal Audit also proactively contributed to ActionAid’s zero tolerance approach to fraud by running fraud awareness training across the federation and hosting a series of events to raise awareness in International Fraud Awareness Week.

The team developed case management standard operating procedures (SOP) for whistleblowing, which has resulted in the implementation of a triaging system which we use to prioritise and channel cases to the right investigator. The audit and SHEA and Safeguarding team now work more collaboratively, sharing the system and ensuring better incidence management.

Country modelling and transformation

Country Modelling and Transformation is an important federation change process that examines our varied forms of presence in different countries

and proposes how we can make our operating models more relevant, impactful, and financially sustainable.

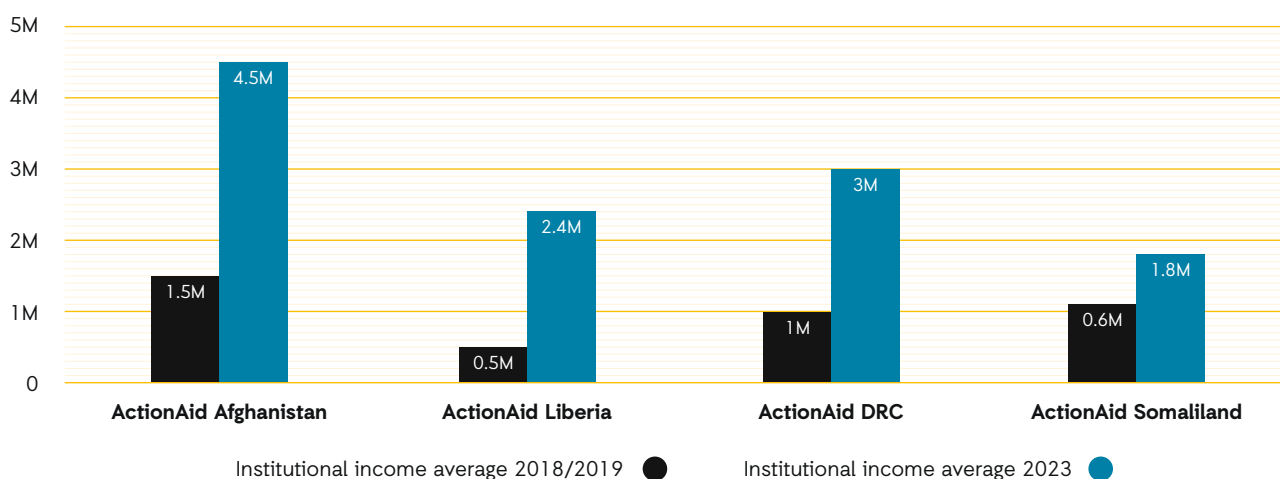
Transitioning to new and sustainable operating models

Twenty seven countries have developed and are implementing transitions to flexible and more sustainable models of operation. Many are reporting improvements, including on programme focus, strategic alignments, financial sustainability and Child Sponsorship (CS) accountability. Countries continue to adapt to new models as informed by the changing contexts (internal and external) and in response to opportunities and challenges.

Child sponsorship rationalisation

The Child Sponsorship (CS) phase out process which began in 2020 is now successfully completed in seven countries. The majority of CS phase-out countries have reported increased fundraising capacity, with an increase in the number of bids and proposals submitted.

Examples of countries who have been able to drastically transform their funding models by moving away from CS dependency.



As countries reduce dependency on CS and increase institutional income, more effort is needed to strengthen the capacity to manage such grants, which is planned through the Service Sharing model.

Service sharing

Service sharing is a mechanism through which certain services, previously available through in-country staff, are shared across countries. In 2023 we set up Centres of Support with global roving capacity for Finance, Human Resources (HR) and Information Technology (IT). This will ensure business continuity is not disrupted because of additional workload created by supporting other countries. The roving team will also help with challenges such as language barriers that may not be addressed by Centres of Support e.g., French speaking HR, Finance and IT capacity for Mali, Burundi, DRC, and Haiti.

Accountability and performance framework

The Accountability and Performance Framework (APF) is a score card with a set of indicators

across programme, people, income, and financial sustainability. The APF is designed to support evidence-based decision making by both management (GS and Country) and governance (national and international boards).

The implementation of the Accountability and Performance Framework was approved by the June 2023 Assembly and piloting was successfully conducted in 10 countries across all our regions. The framework will be fully rolled out by end of 2024 to all countries and the Global Secretariat.

The Innovation Collective

New for 2023, the Innovation Collective is made up of fundraising teams from a range of countries who are exploring possible innovations in fundraising. An exciting new prototype was tested in 2023 in Brazil, Spain, Sweden and the US, and showed success as a regular giving proposition.

As part of ActionAid's ongoing solidarity, campaign and advocacy work to influence decision-makers and to continue calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, at 10.30pm on Tuesday evening 14th November the words "MPs - Vote for Peace: Vote Ceasefire Now" were projected onto the UK's Houses of Parliament. The projection was organised by ActionAid UK campaigners, and supported by Action Against Hunger UK, Age International, CAFOD, Care International UK, Christian Aid, Islamic Relief UK, Medical Aid for Palestinians, Save the Children UK, and War Child. The campaign action came ahead of a scheduled vote the next day in the House of Commons.

In addition, 9,522 AAUK campaign supporters emailed their MP urging them to vote for ceasefire in the proposed bill. A further 40,685 people signed ActionAid's #CeasefireNow petition. PHOTO: ACTIONAID



Transformative Impact Fund (TIF)

In March 2023, the implementation of the Transformative Impact Fund (TIF) began in Somaliland, Haiti and Myanmar and two consortium projects; one in Nigeria, Senegal and Liberia; and the other in Vietnam and Cambodia. A total of £1,858,180 was disbursed to these countries for the first year of their projects, and not only are changes beginning to be felt, but in several countries further funding streams have been secured as a result of the relationships built through the TIF. A huge amount of learning has emerged from the TIF project process, as we reflect on the dynamics of funding ‘transformation’.

A second round of funding will be dispersed to ActionAid Zambia and to two consortium projects; one in Brazil and India; and the other in Tanzania, Rwanda, DRC and Burundi.



A participant at a TIF-funded training on political engagement run by the Mouvement Paysans de Papaye (MPP), a longstanding ActionAid Haiti partner. PHOTO: ELIZABETH RICHARD / ACTIONAID

Through art, ActionAid hopes to provoke ideas, enable sharing of perspectives and increase solidarity actions. Yun, supported by an ActionAid partner, found her perspective shifted through her participation in one of the *Orange the World Through Art* projects, supported by the Transformative Impact Fund.¹⁵ Before joining the project, Yun faced limited opportunities for self-expression, a lack of awareness about gender-based violence (GBV), and a feeling of disconnection from the broader community. Yun found her voice through poetry and music. She says, *"I found my voice in the poem and music of our shared journey and in the colours of working together. This project didn't just change me; it lit a fire inside me. Now, with every word and note, we're composing a symphony of change for a world free from the silence of gender based violence."*¹⁶

The inspiring poem Yun heard performed was shared 17k times on social media, which helped the issue of GBV gain public attention, in turn helping to convince policy makers to shift their perspectives.

At a national level, the TIF grant supported ActionAid partners to take part in regional advocacy spaces, to provide an addition ‘push’ on governments to change policies to better recognise women’s rights.

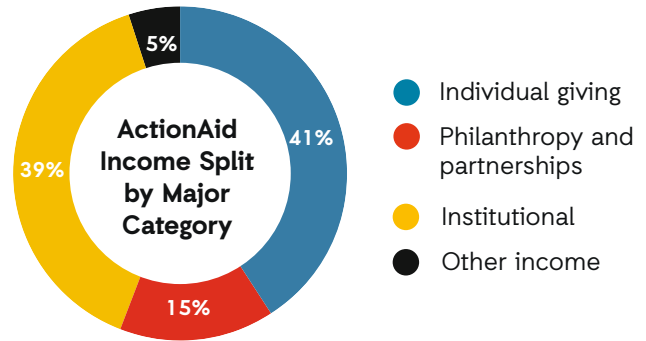


Preparing for the performance of "A Woman" by Ahphay. PHOTO: ACTIONAID

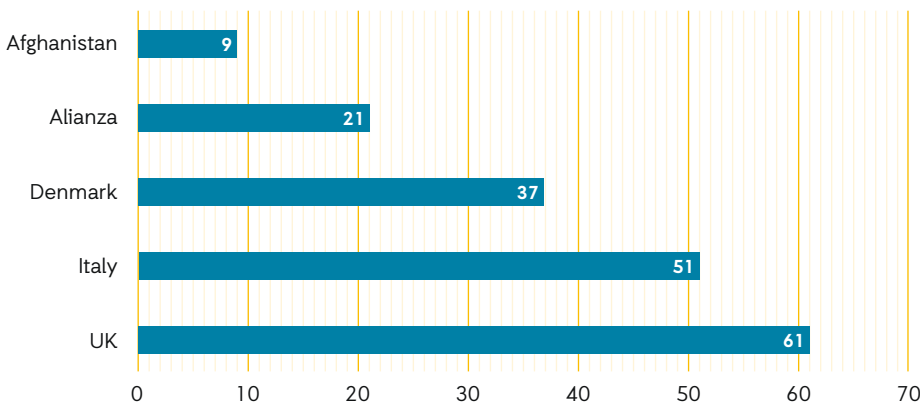
FUNDRAISING & FINANCE OVERVIEW

Income

ActionAid's total income in 2023 was €240million (2022: €255 million), a 6% decline on 2022. The mix of income shows a decline in Institutional income of 4% and a decline in Philanthropy and Partnerships of 14% - due to some projects coming to an end. Other income declined by 9%. Individual Giving income declined by 4% due to challenges in recruiting new supporters. Total unrestricted income for 2023 was €75 million (2022: €76 million), a decline of 1%.

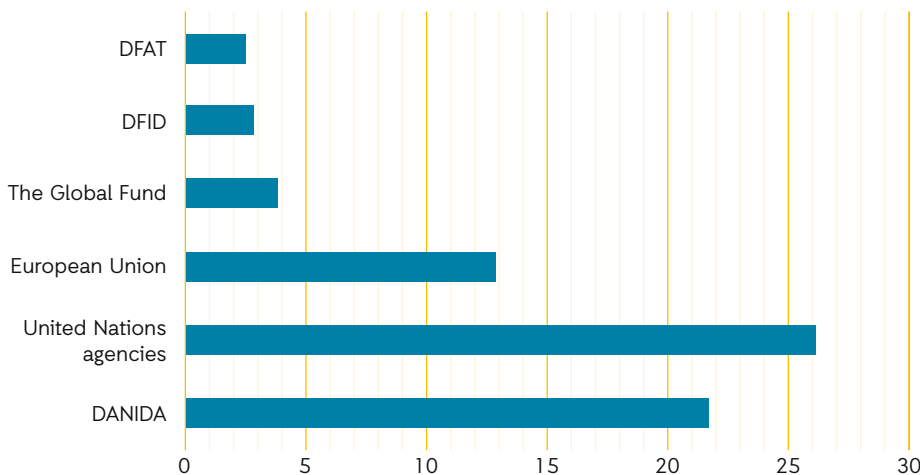


Largest country incomes (€ millions)



Seventy five percent of the Federation's total external income was generated by the five countries set out in the table. Denmark, Alianza and Afghanistan's incomes are predominantly Institutionally funded. Italy and the UK receive funds predominantly through Individual Giving.

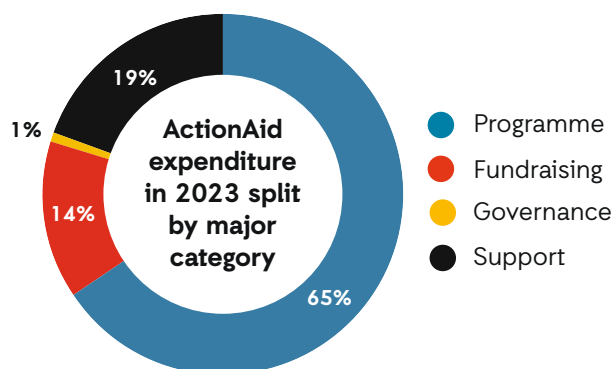
Largest donors (€ millions)



The United Nations and its Agencies were our largest institutional donor in 2023, contributing approximately €26 million (2022: €25 million). The second largest institutional donor was DANIDA, Denmark's development cooperation. The rest comprise of EU, the Global Fund, FCDO – the UK government, and DFAT – the government of Australia.

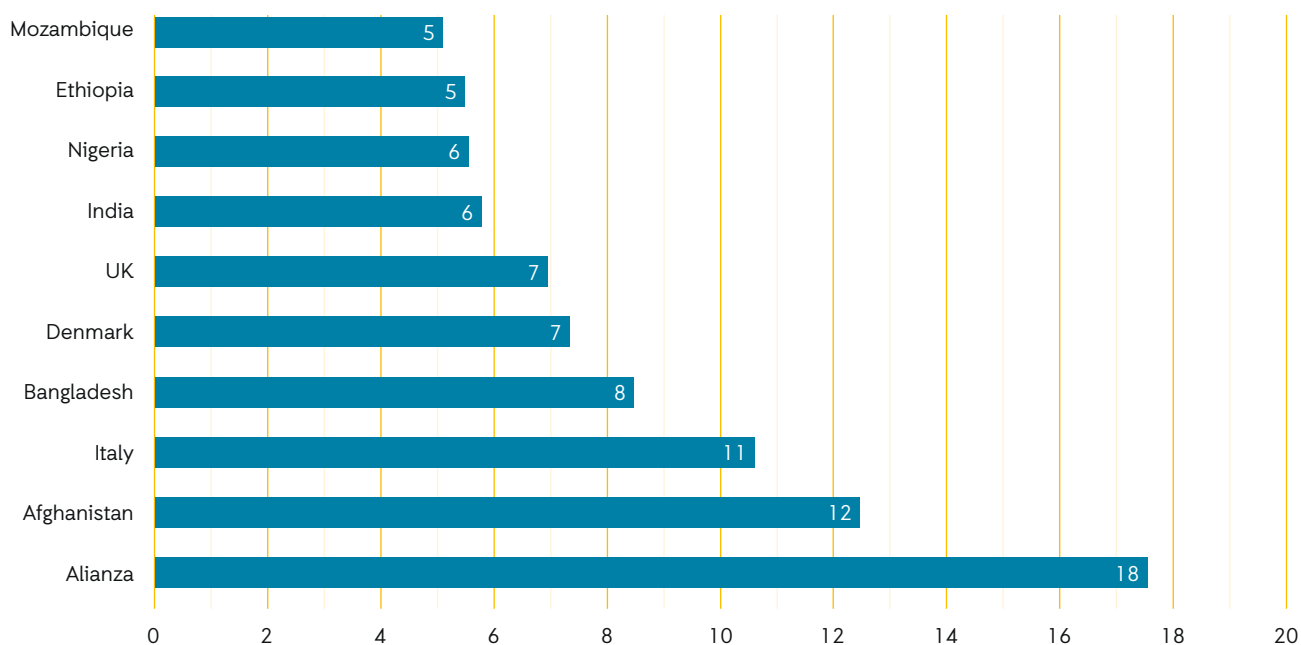
Expenditure

ActionAid's total expenditure in 2023 was €255 million (2022: €243 million). This is a 5% increase. Programme expenditure increased by 1%, support costs increased by 35% and Fundraising and Governance costs declined by 6% and 9% respectively. The split of costs in 2023 is as follows:



Largest country programme expenditure

Top ten countries: Programme Expenditure (€ millions)



Reserves

The reserves position remains strong, and there are strong cash balances across the Federation:

	2023 (€m)	2022 (€m)
Restricted	50.5	55.9
Unrestricted	46.6	52.3
Total	97.1	108.2

Restricted reserves are those that must be spent in strict accordance with the conditions of the respective donors, whereas unrestricted reserves may be spent at the discretion of ActionAid.

Hope and humanity

ActionAid staff, partners and allies – along with activists and supporters globally – are stepping up in their millions to the challenges presented by ongoing global crises. ActionAid’s vision, set out in the 2021 General Assembly of *“thousands of communities organising and connecting with other communities around shared demands nationally and globally, until their collective power to achieve just alternatives becomes unstoppable”* is becoming ever more a reality. Going forward, ActionAid will continue to strive for transformative change, continuously reflecting on how to best shift power, including in funding, and how to support local movements, people and actions to drive change, whilst maximising the potential power of a federation and – crucially – maintaining hope and humanity.

Endnotes

1. See page 6 for the geographical spread of ActionAid’s presence.
2. Following the Geographic footprint review in 2023, we identified several additional areas of presence. Beyond the 25 Affiliates, 5 Associates and 15 Country Programmes which make up the ActionAid federation we also have presence - through partners, through offshoots and satellites of existing country presences with a regional remit eg in Turkey, and through new members joining - in a further number of countries. This means the total of countries in which we have potential to have impact is 75.
3. Our humanitarian reach data is becoming more detailed. Whilst we continue to collect reach data across the federation, we now collect specific data for major humanitarian responses, which is outlined in the table.
4. See: Israel-Gaza war in maps and charts: Live tracker | Israel War on Gaza News | Al Jazeera <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker>
5. See: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-181>
6. See: <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4734>
7. See: <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/turkiyesyria-one-3-children-displaced-turkiye-earthquakes-still-homeless-while-needs-record-levels-syria>
8. Key facts - <https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2023-turkey-syria-earthquake/>
9. Operational locations in Ukraine include: Kharkiv oblast, Kherson oblast, Kyiv Oblast, Odesa Region, Dnipro Region, Kharkivska Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast, Zakarpattia oblast, Chernivtsi oblast, Lviv oblast, and Uzhhorod oblast.
10. See: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/15/more-than-220-killed-by-record-breaking-cyclone-freddy>
11. See: United States Geological Survey (USGS)
12. See: <https://reliefweb.int/report/morocco/morocco-6-months-after-earthquake-doctors-world-remains>
13. See: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ifrc_over-59000-homes-have-been-affected-either-activity-7118868059909406720-TxJK
14. An insightful and authoritative analysis of humanitarian cash and voucher assistance worldwide
15. In some countries, ActionAid and partners’ work can not be shared by name for security reasons.
16. See: www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/unite/orange-the-world

If you'd like more information or would like to access the few internal links, please contact the ActionAid team directly.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all staff and partners who have kept alive the spirit of hope and humanity, even in dark times, and who have joined together in solidarity to shift power to marginalised and vulnerable people. We thank and stand in solidarity especially with those activists in crisis or conflict who are working to ensure social justice for all.

Thank you to our boards for the support you’ve given along the way. Thank you to the many of you who have sent data, analysis, stories, and learnings for this collaboratively generated report; what is written here is only the tip of the iceberg. There is a huge amount of work going on every day across the federation and across the globe. It is seen and appreciated.

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Cover photo: Anastacia, a farmer and leader from Baringo, Kenya, attends COP28 to share her experiences. She brings firsthand experience to COP, sharing the importance of agroecology in tackling Gender Based Violence (GBV), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), food insecurity, and economic instability in her village.

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