



WORKING TOGETHER IN PARLIAMENT





ABOVE: Community members in the Khairpur District of Pakistan gather at an IRC Women and Girls Safe Space where women learn various handicraft skills and young girls take part in activities and games.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR **ELECTION**

As you embark on your important role representing your constituents and shaping the United Kingdom's future, we at the International Rescue Committee extend our warmest welcome and offer our full support.

The International Rescue Committee helps people affected by humanitarian crises to survive, recover and rebuild their lives. We deliver lasting impact by providing health care, helping children learn, and empowering individuals and communities to become self-reliant, always with a focus on the unique needs of women and girls.

Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, we now work in over 40 countries as well as communities throughout the UK, Europe and the Americas. The IRC's unique position supporting people and communities along the arc of crisis – from countries experiencing conflict,

through countries of transit to new homes in countries of sanctuary – means we have the expertise and on-the-ground experience to offer valuable insights as you navigate complex global challenges.

Since 2021 we have worked with refugees and asylum seekers in the UK with essential integration services, whilst proudly standing up for a fair and effective asylum system that provides protection for those in need.

As a Member of Parliament, your role in shaping foreign and asylum policy is crucial. The decisions made in Westminster have far-reaching impact on millions of lives around the globe.

Together with our clients, supporters and partners, we look forward to working with you.

COVER: Yangou, 14, and Zara, 17, inside their classroom in Fourkouloum, Chad. They participate in Girl Shine, an IRC programme that helps protect and empower adolescent girls in humanitarian settings.








WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE CAN OFFER YOU

- ▶ **Expert briefings:** With expertise covering refugee integration to multilateral development bank reform, we can provide written and face-to-face briefings on the domestic and international challenges that affect people experiencing conflict and crisis. Your staff are welcome to contact us for help sourcing statistics, information or case studies.
- ▶ **Visit our programmes in the UK and overseas:** We can give you the chance to see our work in action. You can meet with our Client Advisory Board here in the UK and speak with clients about the challenges they face and the solutions required to address them. We've also taken MPs to our programmes in Sierra Leone and Bangladesh, to see our international work, meet our local partners and see firsthand how UK aid is spent and delivers impact.
- ▶ **Events:** Look out for our events in Westminster, where we bring together clients, policy experts and staff from the field to help parliamentarians understand the stories behind the headlines and their solutions first-hand.

BELOW: Abuk, 30, holds her 4-year-old daughter Nyirou who was treated for malnutrition in the IRC's nutrition programme in Northern Bahr El Ghazal, South Sudan.

OUR IMPACT

-  **3,282** health facilities supported
-  **10,687,491** primary health care consultations provided
-  **578,963** children and **142,394** pregnant and lactating women admitted to nutrition programmes
-  **1,645,941** people with cash assistance reached
-  **45,082** women survivors of gender-based violence provided with counselling
-  **227,779** children in IRC safe spaces and other protection programmes supported
-  **1,589,208** children and youth enrolled in learning programmes



CRISES AND CONFLICT

Today, the world is facing unprecedented humanitarian crises, with nearly 300 million people in need of assistance and almost 120 million people displaced from their homes.

The world is witnessing the fastest increase in the number of conflicts and crises since the second world war, with up to two-thirds of the world's extreme poor likely to be living in fragile and conflict affected places by 2030. At the same time, armed conflict and climate change are increasingly converging in the same places, with conflicts taking place in climate vulnerable countries increasing from 44% to 67% over the past three decades.

Increasingly, these crises are concentrated in 16 conflict-affected and

climate-vulnerable countries, that form a new geography of crisis. People in these countries are grappling with hunger, violence, climate disasters, and displacement in the face of diminishing international focus and funding.

These nations bear a disproportionate burden: they account for 10% of the global population but 43% of those in extreme poverty, 60% of those in humanitarian need, and 44% of people affected by recent natural disasters.


The International Rescue Committee's annual **Emergency Watchlist report** highlights these global trends and identifies the countries at greatest risk of humanitarian crisis.


16
CONFLICT & CLIMATE AFFECTED COUNTRIES ACCOUNT FOR:

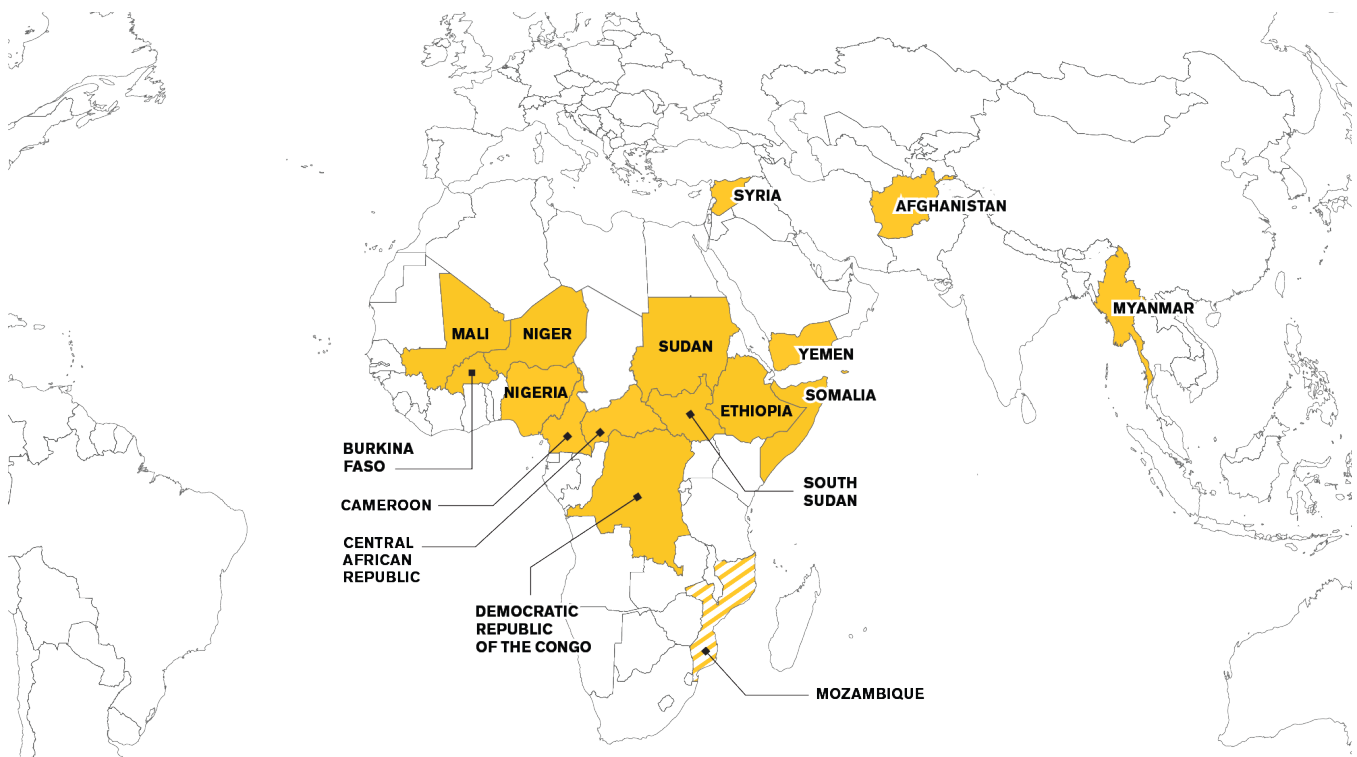
43%
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44%
OF ALL PEOPLE AFFECTED BY RECENT NATURAL DISASTERS

 Countries with IRC programming

 Countries without IRC programming





ABOVE: Palestinians flee the area after an Israeli bombardment in central Gaza City on March 18, 2024.

RESPONDING TO THE **GAZA CRISIS**

The ongoing conflict in Gaza has unleashed a humanitarian catastrophe of staggering proportions.

Over 38,000 Palestinians have been killed, with more than half of identified casualties women and children according to Gaza's Ministry of Health and reported by the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Approximately 1.9 million people – roughly 90% of Gaza's population – have been displaced, many multiple times. With widespread destruction and a collapsing health-care system, 3.3 million people urgently need humanitarian assistance across Gaza and the West Bank. The people of Gaza endure unimaginable suffering in a conflict that shows little regard for international humanitarian laws protecting civilians in even the most dire circumstances.

The UK must urgently use all its diplomatic levers to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza, secure the release of hostages, and ensure unrestricted humanitar-

ian access. Britain must press for the reopening of all land border crossings, safe passage within Gaza, and the restoration of critical services like water and healthcare. Through debates, questions, and cross-party initiatives, MPs can keep these crucial issues at the forefront of UK policy discussions and work towards addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

IRC'S RESPONSE

Working with partners in Gaza, the IRC is providing critical medical care and supplies in hospitals. In collaboration with Medical Aid for Palestinians, we've deployed Emergency Medical Teams of trauma specialists, surgeons, paediatricians, and sanitation experts to offer crucial support to hospitals and deliver life-saving care to injured civilians.

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RESPONDING TO THE CRISIS IN SUDAN

Topping the IRC’s Emergency Watchlist of countries most at risk of humanitarian deterioration, Sudan is facing a cataclysmic humanitarian crisis.

The conflict has led to widespread violence, with estimates suggesting at least 150,500 deaths. The situation is rapidly deteriorating, with famine looming and more children at risk of starvation. Sudan now has the world’s largest internal displacement crisis. International diplomatic efforts have been inadequate whilst humanitarian organisations are struggling to respond, facing attacks and insufficient support. The crisis threatens to worsen in the coming months and risks spilling over into neighbouring countries.

The UK has been active in addressing the crisis, leading efforts in the UN Security Council and providing significant humanitarian aid. Working with regional partners and strengthening diplomatic efforts are needed to de-escalate the conflict and find a sustainable solution. Additionally, the UK should plan for increased humanitarian funding in 2025, anti-

pating worsening food insecurity if the conflict persists.

150,500+
ESTIMATED DEATHS



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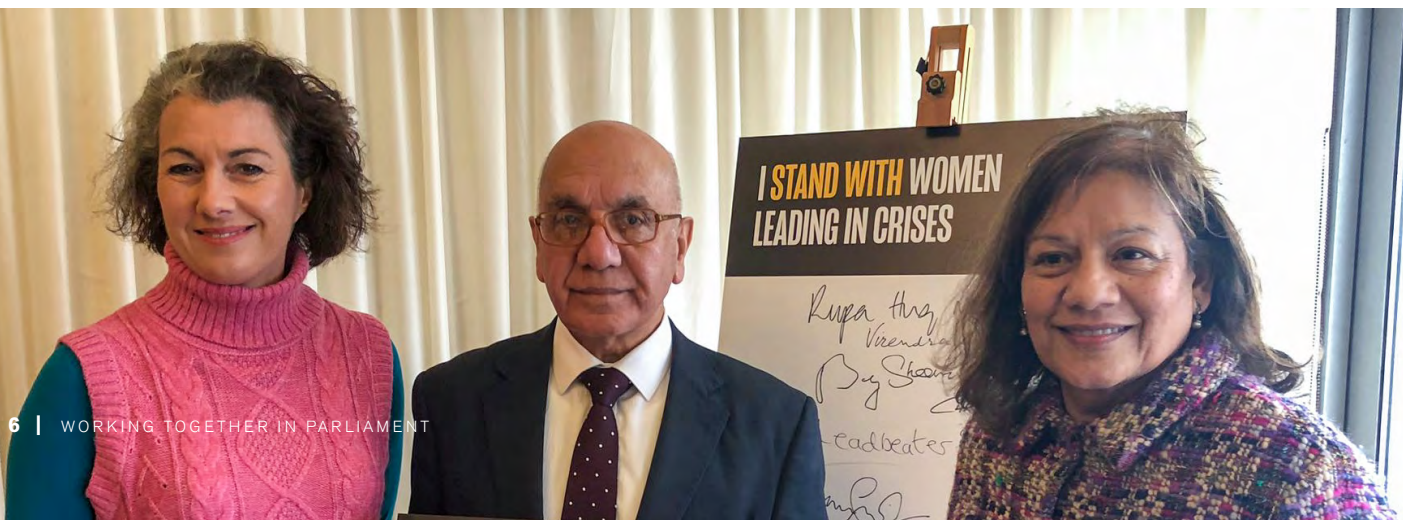
OUR WORK IN PARLIAMENT: REPORT LAUNCH

Women are best positioned to lead during crises and prevent gender-based violence, but too often their organisations are shut out of the humanitarian response.

To launch the IRC’s global report ***Why Wait? How the Humanitarian System Can Better Fund Women-Led and Women’s Rights Organisations***, IRC hosted a parliamentary reception in Westminster, calling on the UK Government to stand with women leading in crises.

The event brought together MPs, ministers, shadow frontbenchers, and representatives from women-led organisations in Kenya and South Sudan. Over 20 cross-party MPs attended and pledged their support.

BELOW: From left to right: Sarah Champion MP, Virendra Sharma MP and Valerie Vaz MP at the IRC’s International Women’s Day event in Parliament in 2023.





ABOVE: Saratu Abdullahi gets her blood pressure checked at the IRC's Outpatient Therapeutic centre in Maiduguri, Nigeria. The IRC supported Abdullahi and her 8-month-old son who was admitted for severe malnutrition.

DELIVERING IMPACT **WITH UK AID**

UK aid is a proud example of Britain's compassion for those in need and helps deliver transformational change across the globe.

Since the reduction of the UK's official development assistance (ODA) budget, or 'UK aid', from the UN target of 0.7% to 0.5% of gross national income (GNI), humanitarian need has only grown, and the need for the UK to step up has become more urgent.

In order to fully respond to this growing need, it will be vital to return ODA spend to 0.7% of GNI. However, the quality of ODA expenditure matters greatly too. By 2030, two thirds of people living in extreme poverty will be in fragile and conflict-affected states. It is in this small group of countries where needs are greatest, and where UK aid should be prioritised so it can have the biggest impact. The UK should also continue to champion equitable partnerships with local communities and organisations – including women-led organisations – recognising they often understand their needs best during conflict and crisis.

And multilaterally, the UK also has an opportunity to use its influential role in global forums,

including the World Bank, to reform and deliver critical funding for development and resilience building in conflict-affected and fragile countries.

OUR WORK IN PARLIAMENT: VISIT TO SIERRA LEONE

In 2023, the IRC took a cross-party delegation to Sierra Leone to see UK-funded projects supporting women and girls.

The visit focused on the transformative impact of IRC's Saving Lives Programme, which provided almost 610,000 family planning services to clients over five years to end the preventable deaths of mothers, adolescent girls and children in Sierra Leone, while building towards a more resilient healthcare system.

Following the visit, we worked with MPs to highlight the programmes in Parliament and media, and demonstrate the impact UK aid has for women and girls in Sierra Leone.



ABOVE: Margarita Bondarenko, 39, at home with her daughter Misha, 14, in Kent, England. With support from the IRC, she received her community interpreter certificate and now helps other Ukrainian refugees like her access the services they need.

STRENGTHENING REFUGEE PROTECTION

Through its work, the IRC witnesses the challenges faced by forcibly displaced people whose lives have been shattered by persecution and crisis. We support both Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and those who have crossed borders seeking protection as refugees and asylum seekers. 75% of those who have crossed borders are hosted in low- and middle-income countries, with the least developed countries hosting 1 in 5.

Britain has long played an important role in providing sanctuary to refugees since helping create the Refugee Convention, standing in solidarity with refugees and crisis-affected communities globally. Recently, this has included protection offers to Ukrainians and those from Hong Kong, as well as Afghans who worked with UK forces. However, there remain challenges. Currently, there have been no pledges to the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) since 2019, and the Illegal Migration Act has created an effective asylum ban.

The UK has an opportunity to reset its response to refugees and asylum seekers by upholding the right to asylum, scaling up safe routes and implementing a national integration strategy.

By focusing on these areas, Britain can maintain its tradition of offering sanctuary whilst creat-

ing a more effective and humane approach to asylum and refugee protection and integration. It will be essential to balance the UK's' international obligations with practical, long-term solutions that work for everyone.

OUR WORK IN PARLIAMENT: WORLD REFUGEE DAY EVENT

In 2022, the IRC hosted a UK Refugee Week event in Parliament to share the fantastic cultural, economic and social contributions refugees make in our communities.

More than 25 MPs and Peers from all parties attended, and showed support for strengthening refugee protection. They also met with IRC's refugee clients, including an Afghan client who was navigating the UK resettlement process. It is thanks to this kind of parliamentary support that we were able to raise and resolve specific biometric issues with the Home Office that sped up biometric residence permit card distribution, enabling Afghans to secure housing, apply for driving licenses, and generally get themselves set up in their new communities.

IRC PROGRAMMES FUNDED BY THE **UK GOVERNMENT**

In the UK, we are delivery partners of the Home Office funded Refugee Employability Programme in the South West, supporting over 500 refugees to find employment, settle into their new communities and learn English. Additionally, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, fund IRC UK to expand our Healing Classrooms programme and launch the Healing Spaces Programme. Through our Healing Classrooms approach, we are supporting 11,000 refugee students by providing training and support to teachers in primary and secondary schools – ensuring they have the skills and knowledge to support refugee and asylum-seeking children's socio-emotional and academic development, as well as their integration into school.

Globally, the IRC partners with FCDO on programme delivery, research, policy, and technical engagement, with funding for 18 programmes across 20 countries. Our UK-funded work includes programmes that focus on tackling

gender-based violence, education, climate resilience, sexual and reproductive health and rights, nutrition, and peacebuilding. Additionally, through three UK-funded programmes we are also leveraging our technical expertise and innovation lab, Airbel, to develop cost-effective scalable solutions to global challenges. This includes:

- ▶ **What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls:** A seven-year global initiative working with women's organisations in Malawi, Somalia, Pakistan, and Uganda.
- ▶ **Education Research in Conflict and Crises:** Aiming to transform education in conflict-affected areas through research and partnerships.
- ▶ **Ensuring Quality Access and Learning for Mothers and Newborns in Conflict-Affected Countries:** Generating evidence on effective maternal and newborn healthcare approaches in conflict zones.

BELOW: Haway Arba Adam, a Sudanese refugee, relocated to the Gaga refugee camp in Chad with her family. When her daughter showed signs of malnutrition, she brought her to the IRC's nutrition centre for treatment.





INTERNATIONAL
RESCUE
COMMITTEE

For more information, please contact:

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