

03 | Global humanitarian assistance

What do we know about how much humanitarian assistance is provided internationally from all sources? Is it enough to meet needs? This chapter analyses the data available to provide answers to these questions and looks at likely future trends in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

How much humanitarian assistance is there?

Humanitarian assistance comes from many sources: individuals, civil society, local and national governments and the established community of international agencies and NGOs. When a disaster strikes, it is the people that live nearby that are first on the scene: the local community, NGOs and faith groups, the Red Cross and Red Crescent agencies and local government services. In response to cyclonic storm Sidr in 2008, the government of Bangladesh activated control rooms, opened over 2,000 shelters and took 1.5 million people into safe places; it issued cash and housebuilding grants, mobilised over 700 medical teams and allocated rice supplies. The Bangladesh air force, navy, NGOs and volunteers were all involved. Such actions save lives and protect property, but this response is rarely quantified or reported as part of the resources mobilised to meet humanitarian need.

Similarly, neighbouring areas or countries may offer support or take in people that have been displaced. The cost of this support is not reported as part of the global humanitarian response.

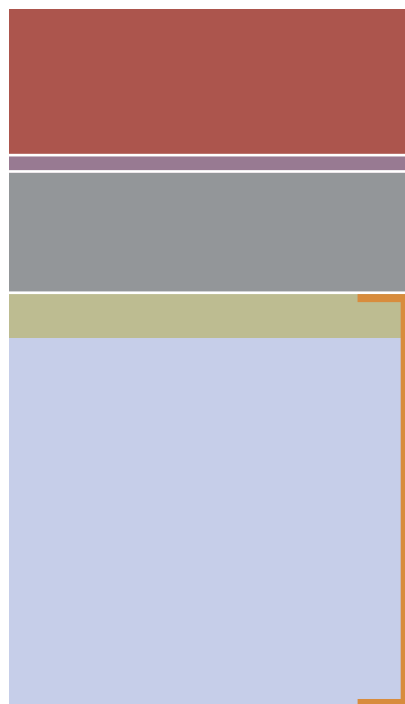
Friends and family living outside the affected areas may send remittances. By their nature remittances are private and therefore not subject to international reporting. But in some situations, remittances are an extremely important source of funds.

The private sector and the military both internationally and in affected countries give humanitarian assistance – often in kind. These types of contribution will be included in the international reporting of humanitarian assistance if they are channelled through NGOs or reported to UN OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS) – but many contributions, particularly those from within affected areas, are likely to be missed.

On top of this humanitarian assistance from within affected countries is the international response. We estimate this to have amounted to at least US\$15 billion in 2007 and US\$18 billion in 2008.

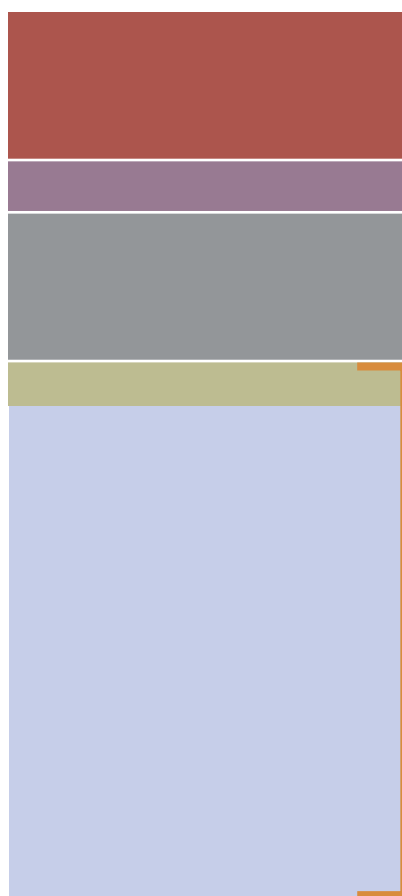
Global humanitarian assistance

US\$15bn



2007

US\$18bn



2008

- Public donations to NGOs, UN agencies and Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
 2007 / US\$3.1bn
 2008 / data not available in full
 Annual reports and initial programme research
- Humanitarian assistance from non-DAC donors
 2007 / US\$341m
 2008 / US\$ 1.1bn
 UN OCHA FTS
- Post-conflict and security-related ODA (DAC donors)
 2007 / US\$3.1bn
 2008 / data not available until December 2009
 OECD DAC Stat
- Multilateral official humanitarian assistance (DAC donors to UN agencies)
 2007 / US\$913m
 2008 / data not available until December 2009
 OECD DAC Stat, DAC2a Disbursements
- Bilateral official humanitarian assistance (DAC donors)
 2007 / US\$7.8bn
 2008 / US\$10.4bn (prelim)
 OECD DAC Stat, DAC1 Official and Private Flows
- Total official humanitarian assistance (DAC donors)
 2007 / US\$8.7bn
 2008 / data not available in full
 OECD DAC Stat, DAC1 and DAC2a

Figure 1: Global humanitarian assistance, 2007 and 2008 [Source: Development Initiatives 'guesstimate' based on OECD DAC Stat DAC1, DAC2a, UN OCHA FTS, annual reports and programme research]

These 'guesstimates' of global humanitarian assistance in 2007 and 2008 show the *sources* of finance for humanitarian assistance – but they do not show who spends it.

UN agencies raise some money from the public but the vast bulk of their funding comes in the form of contributions from governments. Around half of DAC governments' humanitarian assistance is spent through UN agencies – US\$4.4 billion in 2007.

NGOs are estimated to have raised US\$2.6 billion from the public in 2007 but in addition, they receive humanitarian assistance from governments. Around a quarter of DAC humanitarian assistance (US\$2.3 billion) was spent through NGOs in 2007.

Governments of affected countries mobilise their own resources – both domestic tax revenue and special public appeals. They receive a very small share of DAC donors' humanitarian assistance. Non-DAC donors by contrast have historically channelled 70% or more of their funding to governments of affected countries.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is also a major recipient of non-DAC donor humanitarian assistance and, in a number of countries, is the major agency for humanitarian assistance. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement also receives contributions from DAC and non-DAC donors as well as very substantial donations from the public.

Likely future trends

In 2010, if DAC donors keep their current promises for aid increases, total ODA will be US\$145 billion.¹ This will be an additional US\$42 billion in real terms on top of aid levels in 2007. For more than a decade, total official humanitarian assistance from DAC donors has maintained between a 7.6% and 10% share of total ODA. If it maintains a 10% share, it would reach US\$14.5 billion in 2010 – an increase of 67% on 2007. If it were to maintain a 7.6% share, it would be US\$11 billion in 2010 – an increase of 27%.

As a region, Africa receives the largest share of global humanitarian aid so future commitments for Africa are also relevant to the likely future volumes of humanitarian assistance. In 2005, the G7 donors committed themselves to aid increases which would result in a US\$25 billion increase in aid to Africa from all DAC donors. At the end of 2008, two-thirds of the way towards the 2010 targets, G7 donors had met only one-third of the commitments they made for Africa in 2005. However, the United States, Canada and Japan are on track to meet or exceed their targets, Germany is making serious progress, and the United Kingdom has set a timetable to achieve 0.7% by 2013 and is expected to achieve its target on aid for Africa in 2010. France and Italy are off-track.² Among the G7 are three of the top humanitarian donors by volume – the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany.

Sectorally, the ODA spent on post-conflict and security-related activities increased sharply in 2007, rising from US\$1.9 billion to just over US\$3 billion. Fragile and post-conflict states are high on the policy agenda and new funding instruments are being developed to respond to them. This suggests that aid spent on these sectors may be maintained or even increased.

All of these trends suggest that the share of ODA allocated to protracted crises and humanitarian assistance as currently classified is unlikely to fall and may increase.

The number of non-DAC donors providing humanitarian assistance leapt in 2005 with the response to the Indian Ocean earthquake/tsunami. Historically, there is a trend for countries to give an initial humanitarian contribution to either a major emergency or a neighbouring country. This is then followed – although not necessarily immediately – by more extensive humanitarian programmes. We can therefore expect to see continued and increasing contributions from non-DAC donors, including their participation in new funding mechanisms such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

However, set against these potential increases in the resources for humanitarian assistance is the global financial crisis. What are the risks that at the same time as the crisis fuels the vulnerability of the poorest people it constrains the resources for humanitarianism? In November 2008, all DAC donors reiterated their commitments to increases in aid despite the financial crisis. However, the budget provisions needed to underpin these commitments are not evident in all countries. On the positive side, in the United Kingdom there has been consensus among the three main political parties (Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat) that international development should be protected from any cuts in government spending and in the United States the new administration has committed to double foreign assistance by 2015.³

¹ OECD DAC, Simulation of DAC members' net ODA Volumes in 2007 and 2010, page 105, The Development Cooperation Report 2009. www.oecd.org/dac

² See One, The DATA Report 2009, www.one.org

³ Barack Obama, 'A new era of responsibility, renewing America's promise', 26 February 2009 cited in ONE, The DATA Report 2009. www.one.org

There is no clear relationship between changes in gross national income (GNI) and humanitarian assistance, so there is no reason to conclude that humanitarian assistance will fall as a direct result of the financial crisis. Governmental humanitarian assistance grew in 2008 for instance, despite a reduced growth rate in GNI. Three things do emerge: first, large disasters drive the major peaks in humanitarian assistance, regardless of the levels of growth in GNI; second, humanitarian assistance is much more variable than development assistance; and third, in the last five years, development and humanitarian assistance have had more of a shared pattern of growth than in the previous decades.

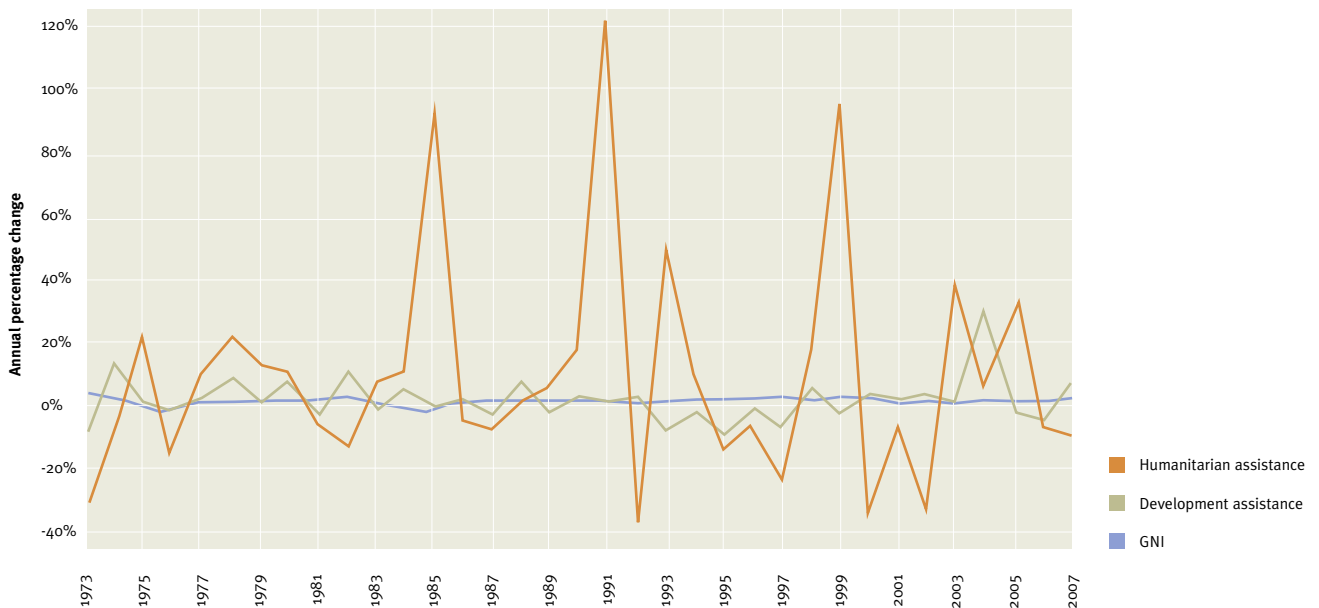


Figure 2: Percentage changes in humanitarian assistance, development assistance and GNI for all DAC donor countries combined, 1973-2007 [Source: Development Initiatives analysis based on OECD DAC statistics]

The other major source of international finance for humanitarian response is public contributions. NGO reports show little change in public contributions for humanitarian work between 2006 and 2007 but consolidated data for 2008 is not available. Based on a review of 19 major NGOs or NGO coalitions, comprising 111 organisations, there was an overall decrease of US\$117 million or 4% in public contributions in 2007. Six NGOs reported increases and 13 reported decreases. For some of the smaller organisations the changes were extreme – sometimes halving or doubling their humanitarian expenditure. But for the larger NGO coalitions, the decreases ranged from 3% to 17%. Contributions from the public account for at least one-fifth of international humanitarian assistance, so a small percentage decrease as a result of the financial crisis could result in a significant reduction in resources.

Is global response to crises meeting humanitarian needs?

Funding according to need is a cardinal principle of Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD). But there is no single, consistent way of measuring needs across all humanitarian crises or assessing whether or not needs are adequately or equitably met.

There are a large number of initiatives underway to improve measures of humanitarian need. But currently, the UN consolidated appeal process (CAP) provides a proxy measure of funding according to need, both within crises and between countries. This is because it sets out the financing requirements for the priority needs within a set of crises defined by the UN as requiring a consolidated response. It then measures the funds received for those countries and those priority activities.

What does the UN CAP tell us about funding according to need?

First, for the past three years around 70% of needs have been funded, leaving around 30% unmet.

Not all countries (and still fewer people) are covered by UN CAP appeals. Consolidated appeals exclude countries where there is a crisis but where an appeal is not considered appropriate, either because the government objects or because the response is being handled in another way. They also exclude smaller and more localised crises

Within the UN process, there are countries that are covered by 'other' types of appeal. In 2008, for example, Afghanistan Joint Appeal 2008: Humanitarian Consequences of Rise in Food Prices; Cuba Post-Hurricane Plan of Action 2008; Djibouti Joint Appeal 2008: Response Plan for Drought, Food and Nutrition Crisis; Lao PDR Joint Appeal for Flood Recovery and Rehabilitation 2008; Liberia Critical Humanitarian Gaps 2008; Nepal Common Appeal for Transition Support 2008; Nepal Floods Humanitarian Response Plan 2008; Sri Lanka Common Humanitarian Action Plan 2008; Syria Drought Appeal 2008; Tajikistan Humanitarian Food Security Appeal 2008-2009; Timor-Leste - Transitional Strategy and Appeal 2008. Some donor funding that is described as 'outside the CAP' in this report will have been provided in support of emergencies such as this

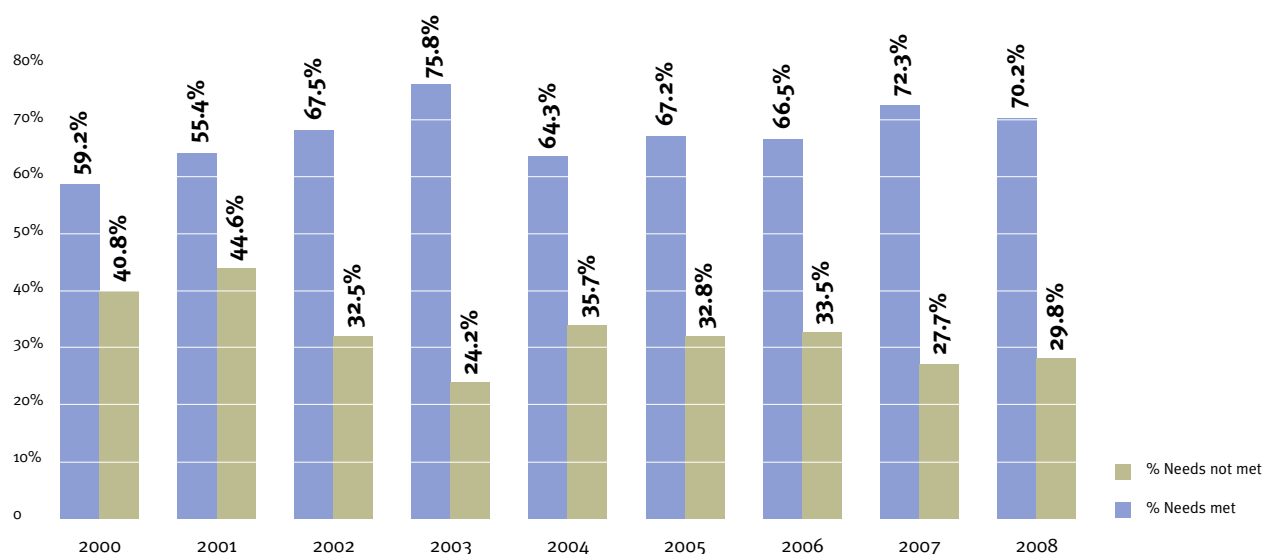


Figure 3: UN CAP appeal needs met and not met as a percentage of revised requirements, 2000-2008
[Source: Development Initiatives analysis, UN OCHA FTS data]

Although the share of unmet needs has not changed much over the past seven years, the amounts of money vary. In 2005 and 2008 unmet needs totalled around US\$2 billion, compared with around US\$1.7 billion in 2006 and US\$1.4 billion in 2007.

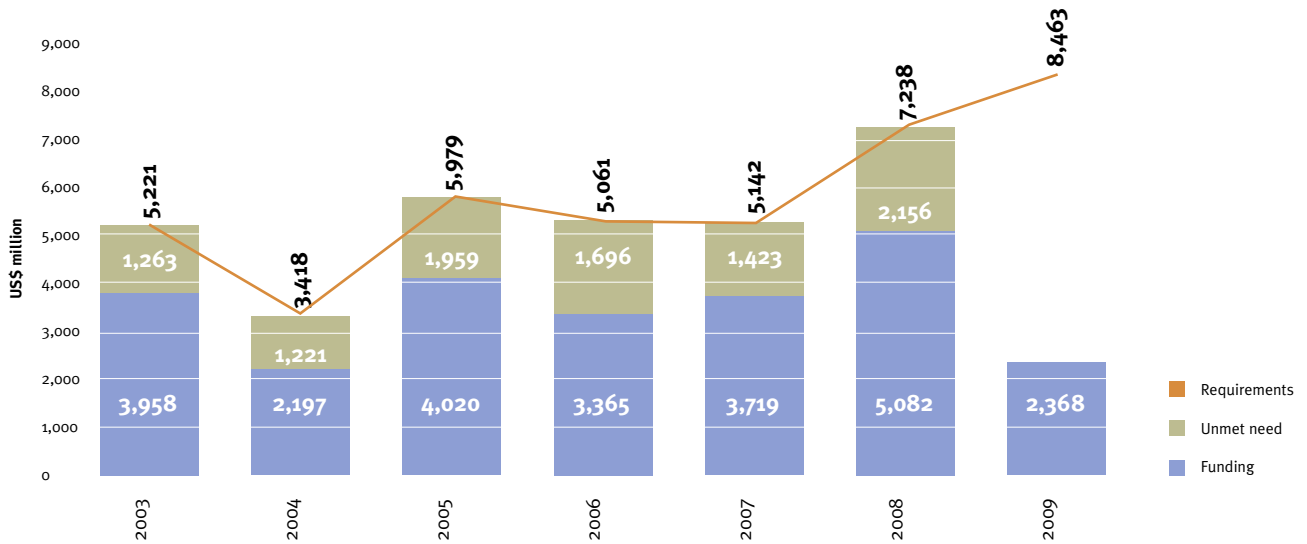


Figure 4: UN CAP appeal requirements, funding and unmet needs, 2003-2009
 [Source: Development Initiatives analysis, UN OCHA FTS data]

Within the CAP there is a huge variation in the size of appeals – typically, the largest appeal will be six or seven times the average of the rest. For the past five years Sudan has been the largest appeal and has accounted for a very large share of the unmet needs.

	Unmet needs in Sudan US\$m	Unmet needs as a share of Sudan's total requirements	Unmet needs in Sudan as a share of total unmet needs for all appeals
2008	592	30%	28%
2007	241	18%	17%
2006	541	34%	32%
2005	888	47%	45%

Table 1: Unmet needs in Sudan in relation to unmet needs for all appeals [Source: Development Initiatives analysis, UN OCHA FTS data]

Although the big crises account for the largest volumes of unmet need, it tends to be the very small appeals that have the smallest share of their requirements funded.

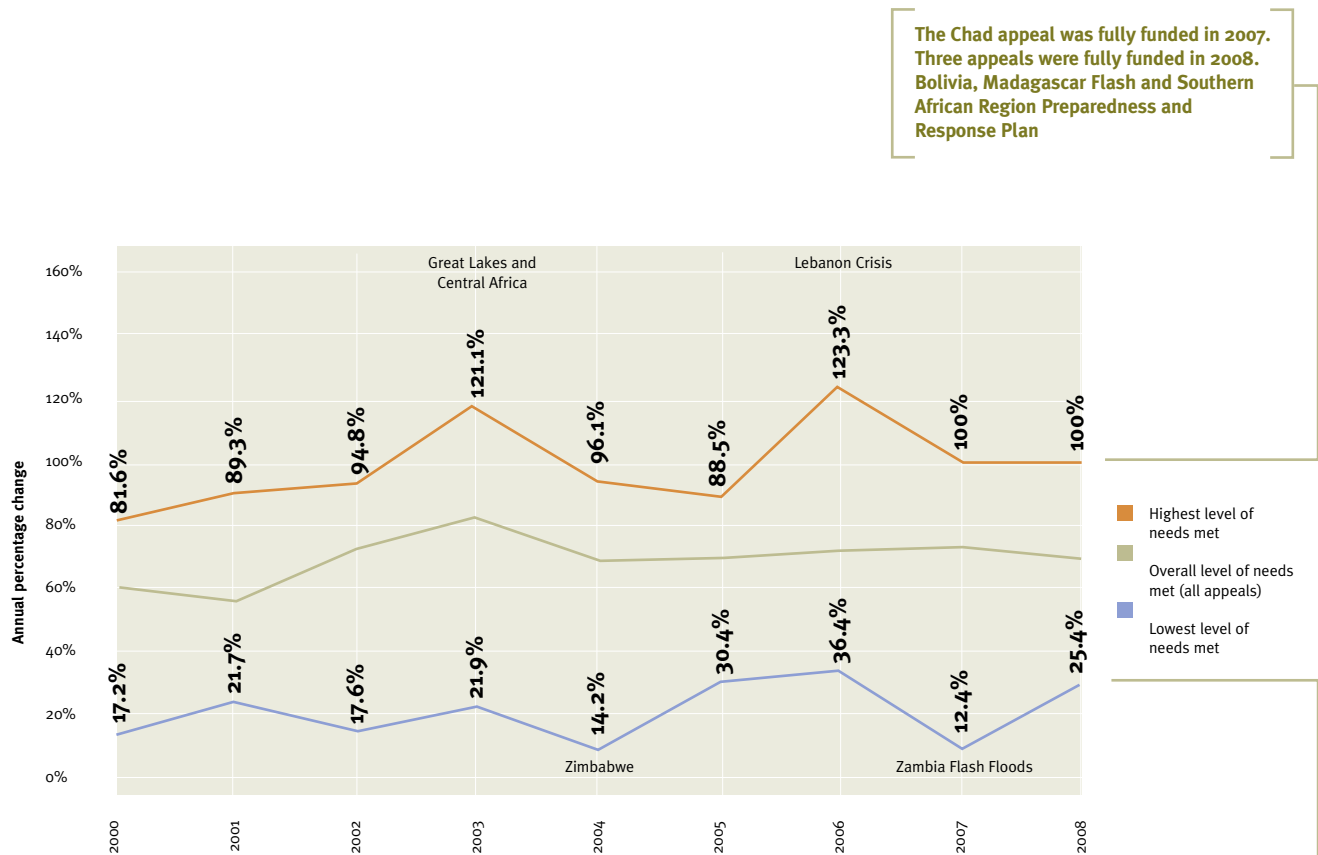


Figure 5: The best and worst covered UN CAP appeals, 2000-2008 [Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data]

The least well covered appeal in 2008 was the Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan (Revised). However, 59.9% of the appeal's initial requirements were covered. The least well funded appeal in 2008 was the Honduras Flood appeal, which was 25.7% covered

Do shares of needs met vary by type of emergency?

Most consolidated appeals relate to complex, conflict-related emergencies. Major natural disasters can result in a flash appeal – and sometimes (although it is rare), a consolidated appeal (as in Southern Africa 2002-2004, where drought and HIV/AIDS among other factors caused prolonged food insecurity).

In 2007, 30 countries were the subject of CAP appeals (15 consolidated and 15 flash) and 23 in 2008 (12 flash and 11 consolidated). Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – both complex emergencies – were the countries with the largest UN CAP appeal requirements and the largest shares of the funding in both 2007 and 2008. Somalia received the third largest volume of funding in 2007 and 2008.

By far the largest flash appeal by volume and as a share of the year’s total in the history of the CAP was the Indian Ocean earthquake/tsunami with requirements of US\$1.4 billion (or 23.6% of the year’s total) in 2005. The same year saw the second highest flash appeal requirement – the South Asia earthquake, with requirements of US\$561 million (9.4% of the year’s total).

It is not only countries where there are complex emergencies that have appeals in more than one year. Kenya, Haiti, Bolivia and Madagascar have each been subject of three flash appeals since 2000 – all of them climate-related (droughts, floods).

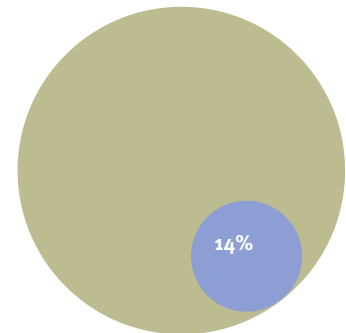


Figure 6: Flash appeal share of UN CAP appeal requirements since 2003 [Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data]

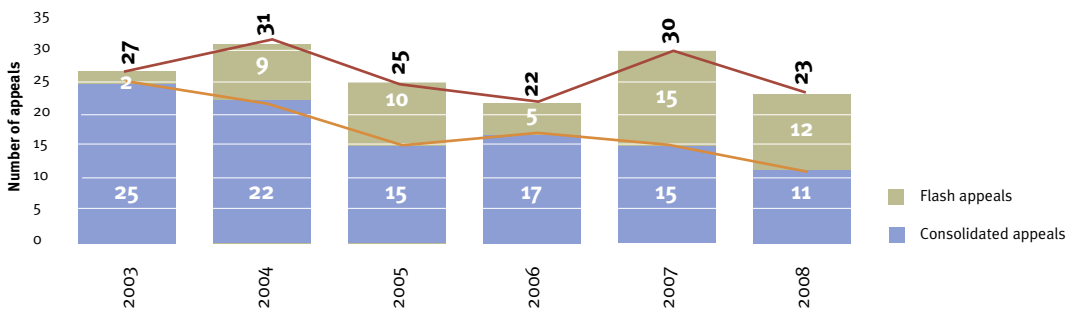
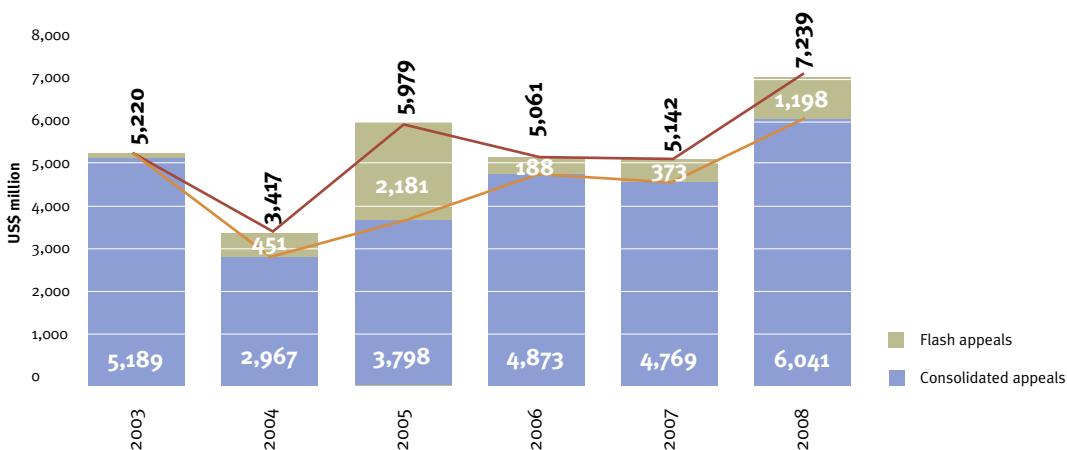


Figure 7: Number of UN CAP appeals [Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data]



Figures 8: UN CAP appeal requirements, 2003-2008 [Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data]

By their nature both the number and the scale of flash appeals varies year on year. However, the share of requirements that have been funded over the last six years has been almost identical for complex emergencies and flash appeals. However, this masks significant year on year differences. While consolidated appeals for complex emergencies are usually funded to around the 70% mark, flash appeals are much more variable. In some years more than 100% of needs have been met and in others as little as 40%.

Six of the best covered appeals since 2003 have been flash appeals – three of which (Lebanon Crisis 2006, Kenya 2006 and Timor-Leste 2006) were significantly overfunded and three of which (Bolivia Flash 2008, Madagascar Flash 2008 and Southern African Region Preparedness and Response Plan 2008) were fully covered.

However, the crises that had the lowest share of their needs met in 2007 were flash flood appeals. This may point more to the nature of appeals as a means of mobilising response than it does to the priority donors place on individual countries. Appeals may be better suited to larger crises that require special allocations. Existing development or humanitarian funding to a country may be flexible enough to cope with flash floods or relatively localised disasters.

Consolidated appeals 2003-2008		Flash appeals 2003-2008	
Number	105	Number	53
Total revised requirements	US\$27.6bn	Total revised requirements	US\$4.4bn
Funding	US\$19.3bn	Funding	US\$3.1bn
Consolidated funding as a share of consolidated requirements ('needs met')	69.7%	Flash funding as a share of flash requirements ('needs met')	69.9%
% of consolidated needs not met	30.3%	% of flash needs not met	30.1%
Consolidated funding as a share of total CAP funding	86.2%	Flash funding as a share of total CAP funding	13.8%
Consolidated appeals' share of total CAP needs not met	86.3%	Flash appeals' share of total CAP needs not met	13.7%

Table 2: Requirements, funding and needs met in consolidated and flash appeals, 2003-2008
[Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data]