

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT CHARTER SIGNATORIES 2025 ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

May 2025



The [Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations](#) is a set of seven commitments designed to help organisations systematically respond to climate and environmental crises. The Charter was **developed by humanitarian organisations for the humanitarian sector**, and addresses the unique challenges and responsibilities of humanitarian action on climate and environment.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

In early 2025, the Climate and Environment Charter Secretariat invited Charter signatories to participate in a survey on their priorities for collective advocacy on climate and environmental issues in the humanitarian sector. The responses, summarised in this document, will continue to help shape the Secretariat’s work in supporting signatories and ensure the Charter can remain a framework for galvanising collective action.

The survey, which was available in English and French, was open from January 29 2025 - February 12, 2025.*

Respondents from **96 signatory organisations** completed the survey, based in 57 different countries. 56% of the organisations operate primarily on the local/national level, 3% operate on the regional level, and 41% operate globally.

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**This survey was administered in the immediate weeks after the stop-work order was administered by USAID-BHA in early 2025. In these immediate weeks, there were high levels of uncertainty for the sector from a financing perspective, which may be reflected in the content and quantity of responses.*

PRIORITY SECTOR-WIDE ADVOCACY ISSUES

Top Priority	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Lower Priority
<p>Priority Issues: Organisations were asked to rate the following priority issues on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest priority for collective advocacy in the sector. The table below presents a ranking of these priorities based on the average response.</p>			Avg.
<p>Inclusive Climate Response: Prioritising the needs and capacities of the most vulnerable populations, leveraging the humanitarian sector's relationships with these communities within national and international fora.</p>			8.81
<p>The Humanitarian Role and expertise in Climate Response: Highlighting that climate change is a humanitarian emergency, leading to loss of life and livelihoods, food and water insecurity, and overstretched systems as well as sharing lessons learned, best practice, community perspectives etc. from the humanitarian sector.</p>			8.80
<p>Access to Climate Financing: Advocating for scaling up climate finance that is accessible to at-risk and vulnerable communities impacted by climate change in conflict, complex emergency, fragile and humanitarian contexts.</p>			8.79
<p>Humanitarian Financing: Advocating for increased investments in climate-related initiatives delivered by humanitarian actors, including scaling up on climate risks and impacts, and feeding into climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and other Charter priorities via climate-sensitive humanitarian responses.</p>			8.62
<p>Early Warning and Anticipatory Action: Scaling up early warning and anticipatory action systems for faster, efficient and more dignified responses to climate shocks.</p>			8.28
<p>Greening the Sector: Support advocacy with donors and the sector to support more environmentally sustainable practices and to reduce the humanitarian sector's climate footprint.</p>			7.68
<p>Alignment of Donor Greening Standards/Priorities: Support advocacy with donors to encourage the development and adoption of common donor standards/priorities on greening, which are to inform their engagement with humanitarian organisations.</p>			7.61
<p>National Legal and Policy Frameworks: Supporting humanitarian organisations in their efforts to assisting national authorities in including humanitarian perspectives in national plans, goals, indicators (NAPs, NCQGs, L&D) and engaging in country-specific processes and policy development.</p>			7.63
<p>International Legal and Policy Frameworks: Supporting humanitarian organisations' contributions to international climate negotiations and policy, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)/ Conference of Parties (COP), ECOSOC and others.</p>			7.59

SECTOR-WIDE PRIORITIES - WHY DO THEY MATTER?

For each of the priority areas above, organisations were asked to reflect on the importance of the issues they ranked highest as well as to elaborate on the challenges they think could be supported through collective advocacy. The section below summarises some of the challenges identified by survey participants and a few reflections on why it matters to advocate for these priority issues.

INCLUSIVE CLIMATE RESPONSE

Many survey participants highlighted the importance of advancing inclusive climate response in humanitarian contexts, noting that marginalised communities—such as displaced populations and persons with disabilities—are often excluded from decision-making processes. Structural barriers, limited support for community-led climate responses in humanitarian settings, gaps in local knowledge, and a lack of political will at both national and global levels were mentioned as some of the challenges to centring local and Indigenous perspectives in building community resilience.

Why does inclusive climate response matter?

- Inclusive response ensures populations at risk (gender, age, disability and marginalised communities) are considered in program design and implementation and that the most vulnerable populations receive necessary climate adaptation support.
- Community engagement, as well as indigenous knowledge of adaptation strategies, are key to effective climate response.
- Ensuring local actors have access to decision-making, especially on financing, enhances effective humanitarian response and climate action.

HUMANITARIAN FINANCING

Many participants shared that accessing humanitarian financing for climate action is challenging, as humanitarian funding remains largely short-term and project-based, limiting the ability to invest in long-term climate resilience. Survey participants also noted that donor priorities often favour development-focused climate response, sidelining the humanitarian sector's climate-related work. Inadequate and unpredictable resources make it difficult to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation at scale, while declining public support and shrinking budgets for the humanitarian sector further deprioritise climate-related needs.

Why does humanitarian financing for climate and environmental action matter?

- Increasing humanitarian funding for climate and environmental efforts helps meet the rising need to address climate and environmental risks in humanitarian settings.
- Sufficient, predictable, long-term, and flexible funding is necessary to ensure humanitarian programming is meeting the growing needs for climate-sensitive and environmental sustainable operations and funding

CLIMATE FINANCE IN HUMANITARIAN CONTEXTS

Survey respondents shared that existing climate finance mechanisms are difficult for local and national organisations in humanitarian contexts to access, referencing complex application processes, uncertainty of opportunities and relevance for humanitarians, and bureaucratic barriers. Additionally, some participants reflected that existing funding mechanisms often overlook the specific needs of humanitarian settings, particularly in fragile or conflict-affected contexts, and frequently fail to include displaced and conflict-affected populations in global climate finance processes.

Why does scaling up access to climate finance matter in humanitarian contexts?

- By accessing climate funds directly, at-risk communities, especially in fragile and disaster-prone regions, can meet their growing needs for building climate resilience.
- Equitable access to climate finance is essential for long-term adaptation and disaster preparedness.
- Building capacity of local actors to navigate finance mechanisms can support access

HUMANITARIAN ROLE & EXPERTISE IN CLIMATE RESPONSE

The humanitarian sector's experience and expertise in responding to climate-related crises is diverse and growing. Some survey participants shared that the humanitarian sector's experience and role in climate response is under-recognised in climate policy and planning. Others shared that climate response remains insufficiently integrated into broader humanitarian strategies, despite the growing role humanitarians are playing, especially in fragile and conflicted-affected areas.

Why is recognising the humanitarian role and expertise in climate response important?

- Climate change is a humanitarian issue - it exacerbates humanitarian crises, including food and water insecurity, displacement, conflict, among other aspects. As humanitarians are increasingly needing to respond to climate crises, it is important for the sector to integrate climate and environmental considerations into strategies
- Harnessing humanitarian expertise, including its long history in disaster preparedness and response, is useful for effective climate preparedness and response in humanitarian contexts.
- The humanitarian sector has evidence to demonstrate impact and bridge the gap between climate action and humanitarian response, which can be harnessed for learning and sharing of best practices.
- Platforms for sharing technical guidance, learnings, and community experiences are important for building capacity in the sector to address growing needs for humanitarian response to climate shocks.

EARLY WARNING AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Effective early warning remains limited by inadequate funding, weak coordination, and gaps in local capacity. Survey participants shared additional challenges, such as accessing localised data, translating warnings into timely action, reaching vulnerable populations, and managing with multi-hazard alerts. Additionally, early action is often siloed and under-resourced within current disaster risk management systems.

Why is strengthening early warning and anticipatory action important?

- Strengthening early warning systems and anticipatory action is crucial for proactive disaster preparedness and in reducing impacts of climate shocks.
- Pre-arranged funding for timely action such as Forecast-based Financing (FbF) is an effective approach to ensuring timely responses to climatic events.
- Investing in early warning makes humanitarian interventions more cost-efficient.

GREENING THE SECTOR & ALIGNING DONOR PRIORITIES

Some participants shared that greening humanitarian action faces a number of challenges, and the sector has more to do to improve the sustainability of humanitarian operations and programs. Some participants noted that the lack of standardised impact metrics for greening further makes it difficult to track progress and demonstrate the effectiveness of greening initiatives.

Why is it important for humanitarians, in partnership with donors, to green the sector?

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preventing biodiversity loss, and minimising environmental degradation will enhance the sector's ability to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of both current and future generations.
- Involving donors in greening efforts is essential to fostering sustainable humanitarian practices and respond effectively to disasters.
- Harmonised standards can improve efficiency, reduce overheads, and enhance sustainability as well as ensure more effective implementation and reporting, leading to better environmental outcomes.

NATIONAL LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Humanitarian actors face varied, but often limited capacity and coordination to engage in national climate planning, despite the role that humanitarian organisations play in supporting affected communities, especially in fragile and conflict-affected areas.

Why do humanitarians think its important to engage in national legal and policy processes?

- Advocating for legal frameworks that integrate humanitarian and climate action is critical to ensure that affected populations are considered in national planning and policies
- National policies that align with global best practices can maximise impact, and humanitarian organisations can play a role in supporting these efforts.
- Aligning humanitarian climate programmes with national policies fosters effective implementation.

INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Survey participants highlighted that the humanitarian sector is often underrepresented in multilateral climate process and have limited access to international climate finance for preparedness, early action, and response. Some participants noted their concern of emerging trends deprioritising climate and environmental action could have dire humanitarian consequences.

Why should humanitarians engage in international legal and policy frameworks?

- Ensuring the inclusion of humanitarian expertise in key global policy discussions could shape more effective climate response strategies.
- Pushing for better alignment of climate agreements with humanitarian principles could ensure more effective disaster response and preparedness.

SECTOR-SPECIFIC ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

Signatories were invited to share specific advocacy considerations in the sectors they worked. The following section outlines the key advocacy priorities in the sectors that Charter Signatories work and engage on climate and environmental action.

CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Charter signatories who participated in the survey highlighted the urgent need to strengthen advocacy around climate-resilient agriculture and food security. Key priorities include:

- Promoting climate-smart agriculture to help communities adapt to the impacts of droughts, floods, and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns.
- Increasing access to safe, nutritious food while addressing the social inequalities embedded in food systems—particularly those affecting smallholder farmers.
- Ensuring sustainable land management to combat desertification, deforestation, and soil degradation, and improving the environmental footprint of food systems in humanitarian programs.
- Dedicating support to smallholder farmers, such as providing drought-resistant crops and water-efficient irrigation as critical for building long-term resilience.

WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Charter signatories identified WASH as a critical area for climate resilience advocacy, emphasizing the need for systems that can withstand the growing impacts of climate change. Key priorities include:

- Ensuring climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure by understanding and addressing climate-related risks to water resources and infrastructure.
- Promoting sustainable water management, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings.
- Reducing the environmental footprint of WASH interventions—for example, by transitioning to renewable energy sources such as solar-powered water pumps.
- Strengthening policies that protect water resources, support watershed management, and control pollution, especially in regions facing water scarcity.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)

Participants emphasised the importance of advancing DRR as a key method for strengthening preparedness and integrating long-term adaptation into humanitarian action. Key priorities include:

- Enhancing early warning systems and preparedness strategies to ensure inclusive protection and that no one is left behind.
- Advocating for policies that embed long-term adaptation within humanitarian responses.
- Supporting community-based DRR to ensure local knowledge and voices shape resilience efforts.
- Leveraging existing humanitarian experience in managing extreme events to scale up climate adaptation initiatives.

CLIMATE AND HEALTH

Some survey respondents highlighted the growing impacts of climate change on health and the urgent need to strengthen climate-informed health services. Key priorities include:

- Addressing the wide-ranging health impacts of climate change, including those related to water and food scarcity, declining air quality, shifting disease patterns, and rising mental health challenges.
- Responding to the health risks posed by extreme heat, particularly the effects of heatwaves on vulnerable populations and frontline response teams.
- Ensuring efforts consider unique health risks based on gender, age, and other vulnerabilities.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Charter signatories also highlighted several cross-cutting issues that are essential for strengthening climate resilience across humanitarian action.

Environmental protection and sustainability emerged as a key focus, with calls to advance decarbonisation and implement more sustainable practices across humanitarian operations. Priorities include improving waste management and pollution prevention—especially in camp settings—advocating against deforestation and harmful practices like illegal logging and burning, and promoting nature-based solutions such as mangrove restoration and wetland conservation.

Improved coordination and transparency is essential for more effective climate action. Signatories called for a clearer understanding of climate- and environment-related initiatives within humanitarian programming, including greater visibility of funding sources and how resources are allocated.

Multi-hazard and intersectional risks were also highlighted, emphasising the need for comprehensive approaches that address overlapping crises—such as the climate-conflict nexus, global health security, poverty, environmental degradation in conflict zones, and climate-induced gender-based violence. Tackling these interconnected challenges is key to ensuring inclusive, responsive, and forward-looking humanitarian interventions.

Technology and innovation were also seen as critical enablers of climate action. Signatories emphasised the potential of predictive technologies, artificial intelligence, and digital public infrastructure to improve early warning systems, as well as the use of drones, satellite imagery, and open data to support climate adaptation strategies.

Other important areas raised include the integration of protection and mine action in climate-affected conflict zones, advancing nutrition-sensitive climate programming, and the growing role of faith-based actors in climate advocacy and community engagement.

RISKS TO MARGINALISED GROUPS

Charter signatories emphasised the need for more inclusive climate action that **recognises and responds to the specific vulnerabilities of marginalised groups**. Many at-risk populations are overlooked in climate policy processes, funding mechanisms, and responses at both national and global levels. Charter signatories emphasised the critical need to ensure that the rights and needs of those most at risk are not overlooked.

Key priorities include:

- Ensuring climate action supports vulnerable groups, as well as marginalised populations—such as women, children, persons with disabilities, and older people—who are disproportionately affected by climate impacts.
- Promoting intergenerational climate justice by recognising and addressing the distinct vulnerabilities of children, youth, and the elderly.
- Addressing emerging intersectional risks, including the rise in gender-based violence linked to climate-related displacement and resource scarcity.
- Advocating for stronger legal protections for people displaced by climate change, including recognition of their rights within international and national frameworks.

UNIQUE RISKS TO MARGINALISED POPULATIONS

Signatories called for stronger advocacy for **intersectional approaches** that acknowledge and address the distinct needs, risks, and rights of diverse communities across all aspects of climate resilience and humanitarian response.

Some of these **unique risks faced by the marginalised populations** are summarised below:

WOMEN AND GIRLS

- Women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change, exacerbating existing gender inequalities and creating distinct risks to their livelihoods, health, and safety.
- Gender-based violence, early marriage, and trafficking can increase due to climate shocks.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- Climate change threatens children's health, as their immune systems are still developing and more sensitive to disease and pollution, and increases the risk of malnutrition due to food shortages.
- As climate change impacts are projected to get worse in the future without substantial action, children and youth - as well as future generations, face vulnerable futures.
- Schools can be disrupted by extreme weather events, impacting access to education.
- Limited climate action, concerns for the future, and uncertainty of climate impacts are contributing to mental health challenges for children and youth.

DISPLACED POPULATIONS

- Climate change may increase the risk and/or exacerbate factors that - in complex interplays - fuel displacement, especially in conflict-affected regions.
- Displaced persons often settle in climate-vulnerable areas, increasing exposure to climate risks.

INDIGINEOUS POPULATIONS

- Indigenous peoples experience heightened exposure and vulnerability to climate and environmental shocks. As communities that are dependent on the land its resources, shocks have devastating consequences on livelihoods, life, social cohesion, and wellbeing.
- Indigenous communities often have limited access to state services, support, and protection.
- Indigenous communities often face exclusion from decision making, despite their knowledge of sustainable practices and adaptation measures.

OLDER POPULATIONS

- Vulnerable groups such as older persons, face higher health risks, exposure to vector-borne diseases, respiratory illnesses, and malnutrition.

ENERGY-POOR POPULATIONS

- Displaced and conflict-affected communities lack reliable access to clean energy.
- Dependence on diesel generators and polluting fuel leads to health risks and environmental degradation, further exacerbating the climate crisis.

URBAN POOR

- Rapid urbanisation and poor infrastructure increase climate risks for low-income populations.
- Water pollution, poor sanitation, and lack of sustainable housing worsen climate-related challenges.

SMALL-SCALE FARMERS AND FISHER FOLK

- Climate change affects agricultural and marine productivity, disproportionately impacting small-scale farmers and fisher-folks

FUNDING FOR CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION IN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR

Issues related to funding often emerge as key advocacy priorities in the sector. The survey attempted to capture what are the core issues related to funding for Charter Signatories that could be considered in collective advocacy. This section presents a summary of key themes that emerged.

1. IMPORTANCE OF SUFFICIENT AND FLEXIBLE FUNDING FOR CLIMATE-RELATED HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMES

Many respondents emphasised that humanitarian crises are compounded by climate change exacerbates humanitarian crises and conflicts can be compounded by conflicts. However, current funding structures often limit an organisation's ability to integrate climate risks into response efforts.

- Current humanitarian funding models limit proactive climate risk planning and adaptation as well as flexibility to adjust interventions and operations in response to new climate-driven risks.
- Sufficient funding is essential to ensure humanitarian programmes consider climate and environmental risks, promoting a holistic approach to aid.

2. THE NECESSITY OF LONGER-TERM FUNDING FOR SUSTAINABLE CLIMATE ADAPTATION

The need for sustained, long-term financial support was a recurring theme among respondents.

- Short-term funding cycles limit the humanitarian sector's ability to advance climate adaptation, as many humanitarian interventions, such as climate-smart agriculture, integrated water management projects, require years to yield meaningful impact.
- Emergency funding often leads to temporary fixes rather than addressing systemic vulnerabilities.
- Long-term financial commitments enable organisations to implement strategies that reduce disaster risks, strengthen local capacities, and ensure continued resilience-building.

3. ENSURING LOCAL COMMUNITIES CAN ACCESS FUNDS, INCLUDING LOSS AND DAMAGE AND CLIMATE FINANCE

A significant concern was the accessibility of funds for local communities, particularly those most affected by climate change.

- Bureaucratic and administrative barriers often prevent local actors from accessing climate financing.
- International funding mechanisms tend to favour larger organisations over grassroots initiatives.
- Direct access to climate finance would empower local communities to implement localised adaptation solutions, reducing dependency on external aid.

4. ADDRESSING MULTI-LAYERED RISKS AND ENSURING HOLISTIC HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES

The intersection of climate risks with other vulnerabilities, such as food insecurity, poverty, conflict, and erratic weather patterns, was frequently mentioned as a growing challenge to be addressed.

- Funding models must recognise and address these interlinked challenges.
- Holistic approaches that integrate climate adaptation, humanitarian response, and long-term resilience-building are essential.

5. FUNDING FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

Many respondents highlighted the need for dedicated funding to improve operational sustainability in the humanitarian sector, without compromising life-saving interventions.

- Humanitarian responses can have unintended negative environmental impacts, such as deforestation and waste generation. While organisations are stepping up efforts to mitigate these impacts, lack of dedicated funding for solutions, such as solar energy, limit more environmentally sustainable solutions.
- A balanced approach is necessary to ensure that sustainability efforts do not divert resources from urgent humanitarian needs.
- Investment in environmentally sustainable operations can produce both short and long-term social and economic benefits, as well as financial efficiencies for humanitarian operations.
- 'Do No Harm' initiatives may be more achievable in some areas facing political challenges in working on climate adaptation.

6. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Several respondents pointed out the need for targeted advocacy to influence funding structures at national and international/multilateral platforms.

- Climate finance mechanisms must be reformed to be more accessible to local actors.
- Governments and large financial institutions should prioritise funding streams that support long-term resilience rather than short-term relief.
- Humanitarian organisations must advocate for increased investment in proactive disaster risk reduction measures.

SUPPORT & RESOURCES NEEDED FOR SIGNATORIES TO ADVANCE MORE EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Organisations were asked what they needed in order to be more effective at advocating for the issues they prioritised in the survey. The following key themes emerged:

- **Funding & Financial Support** – Sustainable and dedicated funding is needed for advocacy initiatives, including resources for long-term engagement, participation in high-level climate platforms like COP and SB meetings, and financial support for small and local NGOs to sustain their advocacy efforts.
- **Capacity Building & Training** – Humanitarian actors require training on climate policy, advocacy strategies, donor engagement, and technical support on legal and policy frameworks. Additionally, workshops on engaging government decision-makers can strengthen advocacy impact.
- **Data, Research & Evidence-Based Advocacy** – Access to reliable climate impact data, case studies, and policy briefs is essential for evidence-based advocacy. Research and analysis on climate-humanitarian linkages can strengthen lobbying efforts and inform advocacy messages.
- **Networking & Partnerships** – Stronger collaboration is needed between humanitarian actors, policymakers, donors, and global networks. Facilitating partnerships, joint advocacy campaigns, and peer learning opportunities can enhance collective impact..

- **Access to Advocacy Tools & Communication Strategies** – Effective advocacy requires key talking points, shared statements, toolkits for consistent messaging, public awareness tools such as media campaigns, and guidance on integrating climate justice into humanitarian responses.
- **Inclusion in High-Level Climate Negotiations** – Humanitarian actors need support in navigating policy platforms like COP, IPCC, and the Grand Bargain. Ensuring their perspectives are included in climate discussions and providing resources for national-level advocacy can strengthen policy influence.
- **Breaking Silos & Integrating Climate into Humanitarian Work** – Greater collaboration across sectors is necessary to integrate climate considerations into humanitarian action. Resources to bridge this gap and strengthen community-led advocacy efforts will enhance local engagement and impact.

SUPPORT FROM THE CHARTER SECRETARIAT

Signatories were asked how the Secretariat can best support in collective advocacy on the issues discussed and raised in the survey. The following themes emerged:

Advocacy & Policy Influence

Advocate for stronger integration of humanitarian needs into climate policies and financing at global decision-making forums.

Coordination & Collaboration

Support local humanitarian organisations, foster cross-sector partnerships, and align advocacy efforts.

Funding & Resource Mobilisation

Advocate for long-term, flexible climate finance that is accessible to humanitarian actors, especially local organisations.

Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building

Equip humanitarian actors with tools, training, and best practices for climate adaptation and disaster preparedness.

Representation in Key Platforms

Advocate for humanitarian voices to be included in climate negotiations, financing discussions, and policy forums.

Strengthening Local-Global Linkages

Facilitate connections between local actors and international funding, advocacy, and decision-making spaces.

Logistics & Communication Support

Improve information sharing, advocacy messaging, and coordination among stakeholders.