



Receipt

POLICY BRIEF

Storytelling international humanitarian aid



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Main messages

- Climate change, alongside factors like environmental degradation, conflicts, and failed governance, amplifies the need for humanitarian assistance. The rising demand for assistance will further widen the gap in aid provision.
- Event-based narratives of climate and humanitarian risks can enhance anticipation of needs, contribute to more efficient prioritization of funds, and guide actions to reduce future humanitarian interventions.
- Indices like the INFORM Risk and the Global Conflict Risk Index can inform EU foreign policy by connecting climate-security risks with development and peace initiatives, particularly when incorporating anticipated climate impacts.



Setting

Climate risks pose significant threats to global development and security. In 2022, a staggering 32 million people faced displacement due to weather and climate extremes¹ - an unprecedented level in recent history. This is just a fraction of those needing international humanitarian aid for climate-induced humanitarian crises, which could double by mid-century². Total aid requests due to all humanitarian causes reached 55 billion USD in 2023³, a fivefold increase from 2010, and may exceed 100 billion within 4-7 years⁴.

Humanitarian aid is central to the EU's foreign policy and security strategy, being embedded in the EU Treaty. Together, the EU institutions and Member States make the EU the leading global provider of humanitarian aid. The EU aims to secure more funding and maintain a balanced structure, upholding pledges of providing at least 0.7% of GNI as ODA⁵ by 2030, with at least 10% allocated to humanitarian actions. It also aims to efficiently use resources, adopting a needs-based approach with principled prioritization using solid metrics. This is grounded on internationally recognized Inform RISK indices⁶, jointly developed with the United Nations (UN) and non-UN humanitarian partners.



Insights from RECEIPT

Collaboration with JRC expanded the INFORM index family, introducing INFORM Climate Change, blending climate and socio-economic projections. It offers estimates on climate change impact on future crisis risks, helping to guide policies on climate action and humanitarian aid. The index helps to examine root causes of crises and anticipate the effects of climate change on humanitarian assistance.

The RECEIPT risk storylines improved anticipation of assistance needed within the context of protracted humanitarian crises. This was showcased by example of the INFORM Severity index, extended to evaluate the severity of various plausible scenarios for the examined extreme events. The humanitarian aid needed in the Horn of Africa was simultaneously driven by prolonged drought and food security, compounded by surging food prices, export restrictions due to production shortcomings, and locust-induced crop damages in 2020 and 2021. The situation was exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, raising cereal prices by up to 29% due to sanctions on Russian fertilisers. This confluence of events could surge humanitarian aid needs by 30% within eight months. Long term results indicated that Ethiopia's food insecurity might soar by 80%-180% by 2050.

In Mozambique, the storyline assessed the potential effects of a tropical cyclone on displacement risks and costs similar to Idai in 2019 under the future climate of 2050 and 2100. With escalating storm risks and growing coastal populations, displacement might rise by 14% by 2050. While Idai's damages equaled 265 million USD, considering climate change could push costs up by a third.

1. IMDC 2023, Global Report on Internal Displacement, [link](#)
2. IFRC 2019, The Cost of Doing Nothing: The Humanitarian Price of Climate Change and how it can be avoided, [link](#)
3. OCHA, 2023, Global humanitarian overview 2023, midyear update June 2023, [link](#)
4. Humanitarian aid forecasts, 2022, [link](#)
5. Gross national Income GNI, Official development aid ODA. The 0.7% ODA/GNI target was first internationally agreed in 1970 and re-endorsed repeatedly ever since (see also OECD,
6. <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index>



Recommendations

Composite indices such as INFORM Risk offer invaluable insights to bridge climate-security risks with human development and peace-building efforts, offering a holistic approach to EU foreign policy making. Using proxies like livelihood disruption, migration pressures, and resource constraints, these indices address empirical gaps in the understanding of the underlying complex relationship. For example, combining the INFORM Risk with the Global Conflict Risk Index (GCRI) – which has a limited focus on climate risks – can result in a more comprehensive knowledge synthesis.

To better anticipate future disruptions and humanitarian aid needs, it's vital to enhance projections of future vulnerabilities in tandem with ongoing risk mitigation and climate adaptation efforts. Aligning these insights with the Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSPs) can further strengthen risk preparedness and response strategies, ultimately reducing future humanitarian needs.

