



■ Countries facing humanitarian crises

👤 Countries facing forced displacement of population (indicators no. 5 and 6)

⬛ Countries facing food insecurity (indicator no. 4)

⊕ Countries included in 2010 CAP or with flash appeals launched in 2009 (indicators no. 7)

4. Humanitarian emergencies and humanitarian action

- 1 billion people, a sixth of the world's population, suffered from hunger during 2009.
- Political crises exacerbated humanitarian emergencies in Guinea, Madagascar and DPR Korea.
- John Holmes, the UN undersecretary general for Humanitarian Affairs, described as catastrophic the displacement of populations occurring on the frontiers of DR Congo, Sudan and Uganda after the joint military operation against the armed group LRA.
- The Governments of Sri Lanka and The Philippines restricted and controlled the delivery of humanitarian aid to displaced people, arguing that they wanted to avoid it being diverted to armed groups.
- Somalia suffered its worst humanitarian crisis in the past 18 years, with a vertiginous rise in the number of people trying to flee the violence by crossing the Gulf of Aden towards Yemen.
- The lack of security guarantees led humanitarian organizations to temporarily suspend their work in most of the countries affected by armed violence.

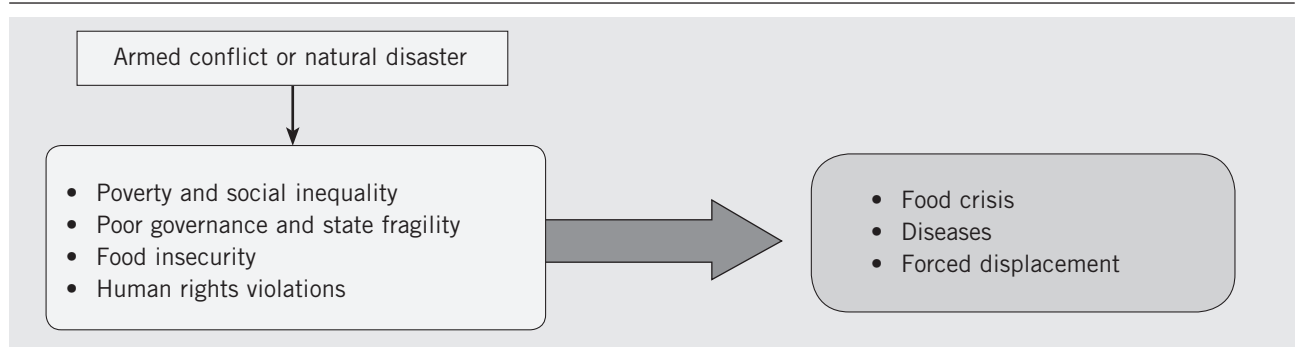
This chapter analyzes the situation in regard to humanitarian crises and humanitarian action, paying special attention to contexts of violence. The first part deals with the definition of humanitarian crises and analyzes the indicators that have helped to determine which countries faced a situation of crisis during 2009. The second part looks at the evolution of each of these contexts according to regional criteria. The third part reviews the most important aspects of humanitarian action practices over the year. The chapter includes a map showing the countries affected by humanitarian crises.

4.1. Humanitarian crisis: definition and indicators

A humanitarian crisis is understood to be a situation in which there is an exceptional and generalized threat to human life, health or subsistence. These crises usually appear within the context of an existing situation of a lack of protection where a series of pre-existent factors (poverty, inequality, lack of access to basic services) exacerbated by a natural disaster or armed conflict, multiply the destructive effects.

Since the end of the Cold War there has been a proliferation of the type of humanitarian crisis that has become known as a complex emergency. These phenomena, also known as **complex political emergencies**, are man-made crises where a situation of violence causes human fatalities, forced displacement, epidemics and famine. These are combined with a weakening or total collapse of economic and political structures and, sometimes, with the presence of a natural disaster. Complex emergencies differ from crises in that they are more prolonged, are at root political and have a significant destructive and de-structuralizing impact on all spheres of life. As a result, the response to these crises usually involves a large number of players, as well as those exclusively involved in humanitarian work, including peacekeeping missions and political and diplomatic figures.

Figure 4.1. The onset of a humanitarian crisis



Four indicators have been used to determine the number of countries that faced a humanitarian crisis in 2009. These indicators measure the seriousness of food crisis, the impact of the displacement of people related to violent situations and the most critical emergency situations for which the United Nations asked for funds. First of all, the periodic reports published by FAO on crops prospects and food situation states that there were 36 countries in which there was a food emergency during 2009 (indicator N°4).¹ Of this group, 28 were in Africa, 10 in Asia, three in America and three in the Middle East. It is a lower number than in the previous year (43), although one thing that stands out is the rise in the number of countries in the Middle East affected by food insecurity, up from one to three, principally as a result of droughts and armed conflict. According to FAO and UNICEF Asia was the region where food insecurity increased the most in the past year, in particular in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

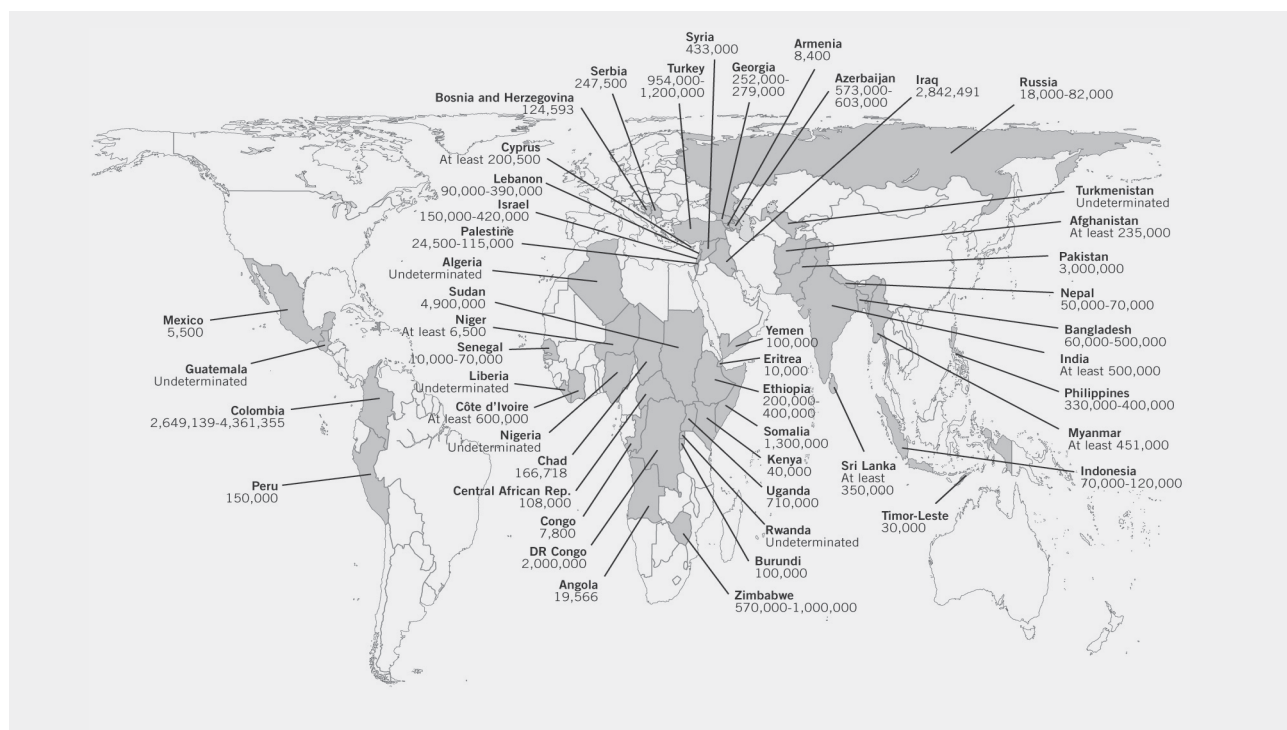
Asia was the region where food insecurity increased the most in the past year

In spite of the fact that during 2009 food prices on global markets dropped in relation to 2008 –when staple food such as wheat and maize reached historic highs –this didn't have any immediate impact on local markets. As a result people in a large number of countries, generally the poorest and the most dependent on exports, had difficulty accessing to food. The FAO annual report on food insecurity published in May warned that

the number of people suffering from hunger in the world was more than 1 billion in 2009, a sixth of the world's population, and almost 100 million people more than in the previous year. FAO said that the reason for this increase was not lack of production, given that harvests were good and improved in relation to those in 2008, but persistently high prices in local markets and the fall in income for a large number of families caused by job losses as a result of the world economic crisis. **FAO described it as a "silent crisis", which implied serious dangers for peace and security.**

The second factor for determining the existence of a humanitarian crisis is the pattern of **forced internal displacement** (indicator N°5), the one that takes place as a result of violence within a country's borders. The report published by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC),² which analyzes this internal displacement during 2008, suggests that the number of internally displaced people remained stable, with a total of 26 million displaced people in 52 countries, being Africa the region most affected. In this context, the approval by the member states to the African Union (AU) of a convention for the protection of internally displaced people on the continent marks a significant step forward in the struggle to deal with this phenomenon and a commitment on the part of governments to prevent these situations arising,³ making the Guiding Principles on Internal

Map 4.1. Number of internally displaced persons in 2009⁴



1. See Annex I (Table of countries, indicators and description of indicators).
2. The IDMC report published in June 2009 refers to data from 2008. However, the data is considered representative of displacement trends in 2009, as it is complemented with updates made by the centre (figures and context analyses) and the monitoring made by the Escola de Cultura de Pau of the international situation during the year.
3. See "Opportunities for Peace" section of this report for more information on the African Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced People.
4. Based on IDMC data and updated December 2009 <<http://www.internal-displacement.org/>>.

Displacement legally binding.⁵ Southern and Southeast Asia were the regions with the highest increase in the number of internally displaced people, especially in the Philippines, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The IDMC annual report claims that in 21 of the 52 affected countries the absence of a political or peace agreement was one of the main obstacles to find a durable solution for the situation of displacement, highlighting how closely this phenomenon is related to peace-building.

In 49 places the situation was described as serious, where one in every thousand people is internally displaced, of which 20 were in Africa, 11 in Asia, followed by Europe with eight countries, the Middle East with six and America with four. **The most serious cases, in which displacement affected one in every hundred people, were to be found in 25 countries, of which 10 were African, six European, five Middle Eastern, three Asian and one American.**

The third indicator, which relates to the **number of refugees assisted by UNHCR**, points to a slight decline in the number of refugees, from 11.3 to 10.5 million, 7%

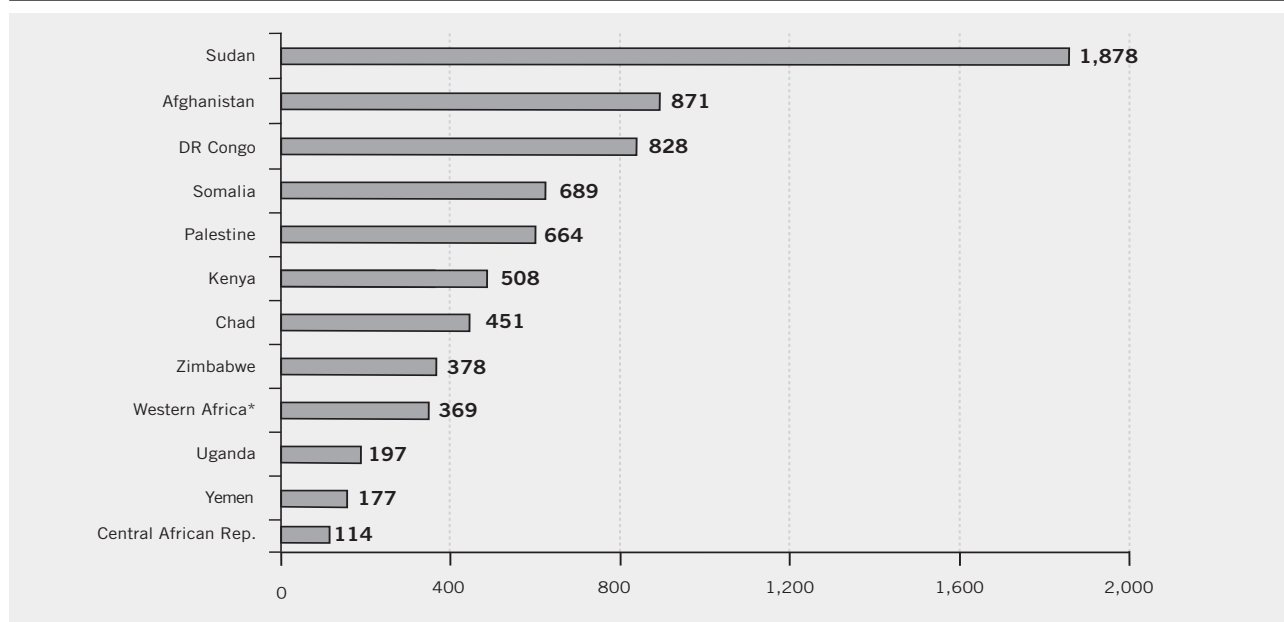
In 21 countries the absence of a political or peace agreement was one of the main obstacles to find a durable solution for the situation of displacement

less than in 2007. However, the number of Palestinian refugees assisted by UNWRA rose in 2008, from 4.6 to 4.7 million. **Altogether, in 2008 15.2 million people lived outside of their country as a consequence of violence.**⁶ One in every thousand people sought refuge beyond their national frontiers in order to save their lives in 67 countries.

In 13 countries, one in every hundred people was a refugee, notably in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine which between them account for two thirds of the refugees in the world. Asia remains the continent with the largest number of refugees assisted by UNHCR, more than 3.5 million people. Somalia (561,154), Sudan (419,248), Colombia (373,532) and DR Congo (367,995) were also among the most affected countries.

Finally, the fourth indicator used is the **Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP)** (indicator N°.7),⁷ the means by which the United Nations appeals for funds for the humanitarian crises that it considers the most serious and in need of international aid.⁸ **For 2010, OCHA appealed in November for 7.13 billion dollar –9% less than in 2009, when it reached a record figure– to help 48 mil-**

Graph 4.1. United Nations Humanitarian Appeal for 2010 (millions of dollars)



Source: OCHA. *Humanitarian Appeal 2010. Consolidated Appeal Process*, November 2009.

(*) Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

5. "The Guiding Principles are based on International Humanitarian Law and the international law on human rights and, by analogy, the rights of refugees. It aims to establish an international norm to guide governments, regional organizations and other relevant parties in the provision of aid and protection to internally displaced people. The Principles referred to rights and related guarantees to the protection of internally displaced people in all phases of the displacement. They protect them against arbitrary displacement, establishing the bases for their aid and protection during displacement and establishing guarantees for their return, resettlement and reintegration in secure conditions. Although not a legally binding instrument, the Principles reflect and are consistent with international law." Global Database Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (General Assembly Res. 60/L.1, 132, U.N. Doc. A/60/L.1)
6. The UNHCR report published in June 2009 is based on the agency's global data from January to December 2008. However, the data is considered to be representative of the refugee situation in 2008, as it is complemented with the monitoring of the international situation during the year carried out by the Escola de Cultura de Pau, showing the persistence of the same situation.
7. The United Nations annual appeal to donors. This is a programmatic cycle meant for humanitarian organisations to plan, coordinate, finance, implement and monitor the response to disasters and emergencies in consultation with Governments.
8. In the second section of the chapter there is an analysis of the financial trends of donor countries within the framework of the CAP and with respect to global humanitarian aid.

lion people in 25 countries. Altogether, the United Nations is giving its support to 12 situations of humanitarian emergency –Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Chad, Kenya, DR Congo, Somalia, Sudan, Palestine, Uganda, Yemen, Zimbabwe and West Africa– considered as the most serious by the international body. The report accompanying the United Nations CAP listed Ethiopia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as among other countries that will receive special attention. In regard to the previous year, the appeal included Yemen as an especially worrisome situation, while specific appeals for Iraq and Côte d'Ivoire disappeared.

The crisis appealing for the largest number of funds was once again Sudan, with 1,878 billion dollar, followed by Afghanistan with 871 million. OCHA pointed out that the financial support requested to the donor countries didn't amount to even 1% of the funds destined by the world powers in 2009 to save private financial institutions and to create economic stimulus to avoid the crisis.

Making an assessment of the data obtained from the four indicators, and taking into account the information analysed during the year by the Escola de Cultura de Pau, it is considered that **30 countries were undergoing a humanitarian crisis during 2009**, six fewer than in the previous report.⁹ Some post-conflict situations which had been analyzed in West Africa (Liberia and Sierra Leone) ceased to be understood as emergencies, although there are continuing concerns about the living conditions of the population. This is also the case in East Timor in Asia and Haiti in America, although the fragility of these contexts cannot discard the onset of an emergency within a short time. Guatemala has appeared as a new emergency, a sign of the impact the economic crisis mainly have on the food security levels of the population of Central America.

Box 4.1. Countries facing humanitarian crises in 2009

Afghanistan	Guatemala	Nigeria
Burundi	Guinea	Pakistan
Central African Republic	Iraq	Palestine
Chad	Kenya	Philippines
Colombia	Madagascar	Somalia
Côte d'Ivoire	Mali	Sri Lanka
DPR Korea	Mauritania	Sudan
DR Congo	Myanmar	Uganda
Eritrea	Nepal	Yemen
Ethiopia	Niger	Zimbabwe

During the year, Africa continued to be the continent most affected by humanitarian crises, with 16 of the 30 existing (51%), followed by Asia with six, the Middle

East with three and America with two. This report does not deal with situations of long-term displacement of populations that exist in various European and Central Asian countries given that, although the situation of the population is far from being normalized, the conditions of vulnerability and emergency are not such that they would be considered humanitarian crises.

4.2. Evolution of humanitarian crises

During 2009 the majority of these situations deteriorated considerably, forcing the humanitarian community to significantly revise their budgets, and to demand more funding after the second quarter. There were especially worrying situations in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Yemen, with a sharp rise in the number of people in need of assistance compared to the previous year. The situation relatively improved in places such as Chad, although there was still a degree of humanitarian emergency. The fact that Côte d'Ivoire was excluded from the consolidated appeals process indicated the improvement of the humanitarian situation in the country in recent years, although it remains fragile.

Africa

OCHA pointed out that the financial support requested to the donor countries didn't amount to even 1% of the funds destined by the world powers in 2009 to save private financial institutions

If in 2008 the rise in the price of the main staple foods was responsible for the aggravation of many humanitarian emergencies on the continent, in 2009 the sharpening levels of violence and natural disasters were the main causes of crisis. The serious impact of the food crisis from the previous year had reduced the capacity of many people to cope, as a result of which OCHA and FAO insisted on the necessity to invest in prevention and early recovery programs, which

brought together humanitarian and development aid to strengthen the response capacity of the population. The most serious situations took place in Somalia, DR Congo, Sudan and Ethiopia.

a) Southern Africa

Countries	Crisis factors
Madagascar	Political crisis, natural disasters, international isolation
Zimbabwe	Political and economic crisis, HIV/AIDS, international isolation

The region's main humanitarian emergencies developed in two context of socio-political crisis, **Madagascar and Zimbabwe**, where the effect of poor harvests, drought and epidemics were aggravated by the instability of the Governments of both countries, which had the effect of reducing the international community's donations. Lack of trust in local governments led international bodies

9. Humanitarian crises analysed in this chapter have obtained a high value in at least three of the four indicators used. Nevertheless, there are some exceptions – Angola, Bangladesh, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Syria – where it is recognized that the situation is extremely fragile even if it is not a humanitarian emergency. The chapter also provides information about Colombia, DPR Korea, Madagascar and Nepal, each of which deserves special attention even if they don't comply with the discrimination criteria.

such as the EU to stop bilateral aid and to channel funds for humanitarian aid via the NGOs of both countries. However, the need for a global response to the humanitarian crises highlighted the importance of a co-ordinated response by humanitarian organizations and the Government.

In April OCHA launched an emergency appeal to help 3.4 million people in **Madagascar**. The office remarked that the political crisis in the country had reduced the capacity of the State to meet people's needs. The prevailing drought in the south and typhoons in the north of the island aggravated food insecurity. Equally, OCHA increased the humanitarian appeal budget made in December 2008 for **Zimbabwe**, from \$550 million to \$719 million while FAO estimated that 2.8 million people would face food insecurity in the country in 2009. In July, the country declared cholera epidemic over after it had killed at least 4,300 people and infected more than 100,000 since August 2008.

Particularly worrying was also the situation generated by torrential rains that affected Namibia and Angola, as was the humanitarian emergency that took place on the border between Angola and DR Congo, in which 30,000 Angolans were forced to go back to their country, where according to UNHCR they faced conditions of extreme vulnerability.

b) West Africa

Countries	Crisis factors
Côte d'Ivoire	Economic and political crisis, return of displaced people
Guinea	Political crisis, international isolation
Nigeria	Armed conflict, forced displacement
Sahel (Mauritania, Mali & Niger)	Tension, economic and political crisis, natural disasters

Although West Africa was not the scenario of the continent's worst humanitarian crises, the inclusion of the area within the Consolidated Appeals Process in 2010 revealed the fragile living conditions of a large part of the population. The combined effects of food insecurity, recurrent disasters, epidemics and socio-political instability (Guinea, Mauritania, Niger), added to the increased activity of drug trafficking networks and the illegal arms trade in the region (Guinea-Bissau), has left 139 million people in conditions of extreme poverty. The extreme poverty reduces the capacity of people to cope with possible humanitarian emergencies. Heavy rains in September forced OCHA to make an emergency appeal for Burkina Faso, a country especially badly affected with 100,000 displaced people and dozens of victims.

The return to their villages of internally displaced people in **Côte d'Ivoire** revealed the limited support these

communities were receiving, especially in the west of the country where traditional chiefs said they were worried about the scarcity of food, water and medical assistance. The same situation was reproduced in the north of **Niger**, where the return of people displaced by the Tuareg conflict led to demands for assistance of the population. On the other hand, the level of violence in Guinea and Nigeria increased the degree of vulnerability in both countries. In **Guinea** donor countries cancelled all official aid reacting to the *coup d'état*; while in **Nigeria** military operations in the Niger Delta region and violence in the north –violent actions by Islamist sects and inter-communitarian clashes, led to increased levels of internal displacement with an insufficient response at government level. The erratic rainfalls throughout the year in the west of the **Sahel** region may make levels of chronic malnutrition, already extremely high, even worse, as well as reducing the amount of pasture land, which could generate conflicts between communities faced with prevailing shortages of resources.

c) Horn of Africa

Countries	Crisis factors
Eritrea	Tension, natural disasters, forced displacement
Ethiopia	Armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement
Somalia	Armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement
Sudan	Armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement

Violence, insecurity and droughts made the Horn of Africa the most critical zone on the continent. FAO and WFP warned that 23 million people in the region needed urgent food aid. WFP asked for \$1 billion to fund its operations in the Horn during the first six months of 2010. More than half of the affected people, some 13.7 million, were in **Ethiopia**. An Oxfam International report said that 6.2 million people in the country were in need of urgent aid, underlining the fact that 25 years after the Band Aid campaign (set up to attract funds to alleviate the starvation that caused the death of 1 million people in the 1980s) there had been little advance in strategies to strengthen the levels of food security over the long term.¹⁰ However, the Ethiopian Government reported much lower figures, suggesting that only 4.9 million people needed aid. At the same time, numerous NGOs criticized excessive government control over them which limited their capacity to assist the population. In **Eritrea**, in spite of the fact that president Isaias Afewerki took a positive view regarding food supply in 2010, WFP and other humanitarian organizations emphasised the worrying situation in the country, where malnutrition affected two out of every three people, according to FAO, and where strict government controls over the movements of NGOs would make humanitarian operations more difficult in the event of an emergency.

10. Nick Martlew. *Band Aids and beyond: tackling disasters in Ethiopia 25 years after de famine*. Oxfam Briefing Paper, 22 October, 2009, <<http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bp133-band-aids-beyond.pdf>>.

Attacks on humanitarian workers in Somalia and Sudan hampered access to people cut off by the violence and living in extremely difficult conditions. In the case of Somalia, the armed group al-Shabab stopped the humanitarian work of all the NGOs in territory under its control with threats of violence, while accusing these organizations of spreading non-Islamic values. The UN said that the country was facing its worst humanitarian crisis of the past 18 years and that the funds offered by the donor community were insufficient for the almost 4,000,000 people dependent on humanitarian aid. One statistic that illustrates the seriousness of the crisis is the number of Somalis who tried to cross the Gulf of Aden to seek refuge in Yemen during the rainy season – the most dangerous time to make the crossing – which doubled the figure of the previous year.

In **Sudan**, the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant against the Sudanese president led to the expulsion of 16 NGOs (13 of them international) operating in the Darfur region. At the time it was estimated that this left 4.7 million people in the province without assistance. The announcement by the government that it intends to close refugee camps in 2010 could trigger a new crisis of internally displaced people. Furthermore, the growing violence in the south of the country led to the displacement of 350,000 people in the area where 1.2 million people live in a situation of severe food shortages made worse by the persistent drought. In spite of the attempts by the United Nations and various mediating groups to arrive at agreements with the armed groups and the Government in order to help the efforts of humanitarian workers in both countries, the number of kidnappings and attacks on humanitarian convoys continue to grow, forcing the suspension of aid on repeated occasions.

The international arrest warrant issued against the Sudanese president led to the expulsion from Darfur of 13 international NGOs

tions against the Rwandan FDLR in DR Congo, which led to the displacement of the local population. Meanwhile in **Uganda** the humanitarian emergency focused on the situation of the returnees, as 1.4 million people who have decided to go back home since 2006 were facing a total lack of basic services and security in a region still plagued by arms. OCHA issued a reminder in its 2010 appeal of the necessity to coordinate the cessation of an emergency operation with the establishment of development projects so as to avoid a situation in which the people found themselves without assistance.

The United Nations said the increasing number of attacks against humanitarian personnel in **Chad** was one of the main obstacles to the aid operations. In 2009 the number of reported attacks rose to 192, compared to 100 in 2008, the majority of which were attributed to the prevailing criminality in the area and not to the armed conflict. The security situation meant that aid

operations were suspended on numerous occasions. However Michele Falavigna, the resident humanitarian coordinator, said there were positive signs of recovery that would allow some of the funds requested by OCHA through the CAP to fund early recovery and development projects. Among these positive signs, Falavigna pointed to the return of a significant part of the country's 168,000 internally displaced people. Insecurity was also a constant factor in the **Central African Republic**, worsened by the attacks of the Ugandan armed group LRA in the southeast. UNHCR estimated that 100 Central Africans were crossing the border into Chad every day to flee the violence, with the result that there were 70,000 refugees in the neighbouring country. Catherine Bragg, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, warned that as a result of the violence at least a quarter of the population was in need of humanitarian aid.

d) Great Lakes and Central Africa

Countries	Crisis factors
Burundi	Post-conflict situation, return of displaced people
Chad	Armed conflict, regional instability, forced displacement
Kenya	Tension, natural disasters, forced displacement
Central African Rep.	Armed conflict, forced displacement
DR Congo	Armed conflict, forced displacement, epidemics
Uganda	Armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement

The humanitarian situation in the region was seriously affected by the dynamics of cross-border violence on the part of armed groups such as the Ugandan LRA,¹¹ military operations and attacks by insurgent groups on the frontier between Chad and Sudan, and joint opera-

OCHA kept on describing the humanitarian situation in **DR Congo** as among the worst in the world. Joint military operations against the FDLR in the east and against the LRA in the northeast caused the internal displacement of more than 140,000 people. John Holmes, the undersecretary general for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, described the joint military operation against the LRA as catastrophic due to the complete absence of protection for civilians. Since September 2008, a total of 540,000 people have been forced to move in the east of the country, according to the United Nations. There has also been a serious increase in attacks against humanitarian personnel in the region, with more than 100 in North Kivu alone, the highest number yet recorded in one year in the area, according to the United Nations. There was continued cause for concern about the humanitarian situation of people in the rest of DR Congo in areas not affected by the violence, with extremely high mortality rates, sickness and malnutrition, according to OCHA.

11. See Chapter 1 (Armed conflicts).

Box 4.2. IDP camps: war strategy and humanitarian dilemmas

Sovereignty establishes the principle that the State is responsible for protecting people within its territory who are affected by violence or armed conflict. However, in reality, in too many cases the State is the main cause of its citizens' suffering. Applying this reality to an analysis of the internal displacement of populations shows that, on many occasions, governments have developed strategies in order to expel a population from a particular territory. The logic behind this strategy is that of the metaphor used by Mao Tse Tung, to "deprive the fish of water", according to which, moving people from a particular area deprives armed opposition groups, directly or indirectly, of popular support. To this it must be added that, in some cases the affected territory possesses important economic or geostrategic resources.

The ethical debate associated with this reality comes to the fore when humanitarian organizations have to carry out the duty of helping people displaced as a result of this deliberate strategy. In some cases, the displaced people are held in camps created by their own Government, and which are under close surveillance in order to prevent them from returning. In other cases, attempts are also made by the Armed Forces to find out members of insurgent groups or their collaborators, rendering all the occupants victims of siege and threats. Providing aid in these camps of forcibly displaced people indirectly supports the government's strategy of "territorial cleansing". However, the alternative of not aiding and openly condemning the situation might only make things worse for the internally displaced people.

An experience such as this arose in Uganda during the 1990s, when WFP was assisting displaced people in settlement camps, while the government was insisting that these people had been displaced by attacks carried out by the armed group LRA.¹² In Turkey, also in the 1990s, the Government launched a resettlement program, creating "centralized villages" to prevent the Kurds returning to the southeast, and where the people's movements were monitored.¹³ Something similar happened in Sri Lanka in 2009, when the government created reception centres for people displaced during the last military operation against the LTTE, without allowing those who had fled to return to their homes. In all these cases, the State bodies insist that people have been displaced by armed groups.

Access to people displaced and held in camps as a result of government action is in many cases restricted, particularly during the early phases of the "cleansing" strategy. However, the inability or the unwillingness of the State to help these people, combined in many cases with international pressure, means that the task falls to humanitarian organizations. The principles of humanitarian action – impartiality, neutrality and independence – mean that, in order to go about their work, it is difficult for humanitarian workers to bring pressure to bear to end what is a serious violation of the International Humanitarian Law, if they want to provide aid.

The principle of the Responsibility to Protect,¹⁴ at the same time as recognizing the principle of State sovereignty, establishes that the international community is responsible for dealing with situations of vulnerability and violation of rights when the institutions of a particular sovereign state are not capable or not willing to help their citizens. At the same time, civil society organizations are key to condemning and making known the strategic use of forced displacement, creating a greater social awareness that may lead to the international community taking up the issue.

Finally, the persistent drought not only aggravated food shortages in **Kenya** – which has suffered its worst water shortage in a decade – but has led to an increase in displaced people as a result of inter-communal clashes over resources in the north of the country. This also contributed to the increase in the forced expulsion of Somali refugees because of a shortage of resources in the same area and led to an extreme deterioration in the humanitarian conditions of those who remained in refugee camps along the frontier. An especially worrying development was the report made by Human Rights Watch about the recruitment of young Somalis in Dadaab refugee camps on the part of the Kenyan Government in

order to create militias to fight the expansion of the armed al-Shabab group within its frontiers.¹⁵ The Kenyan president decreed a national disaster situation over the food crisis that affected 3.5 million people and asked the international community for \$400 million in aid. Food shortages continued to be a matter of concern in **Burundi**, where several provinces were badly affected by natural disasters, conflicts over territorial control, the return of Burundian refugees (31,562 this year), epidemics and a shortage of supplies to local markets, according to the UN secretary-general's report on the country.¹⁶

12. Batha, Emma. "Have aid agencies prolonged Uganda's war?". Reuters, 21 February 2009.

13. Linzey, Sharon and Mark Muller. *The Internally Displaced Kurds of Turkey: ongoing issues of responsibility, redress and resettlement*. KHRP, September 2007.

14. Principle approved by the UN General Assembly in 2005, according to which the international community is responsible for protecting civilians of a third State when the sovereign authorities fail to do so. For more information see *ICISS The responsibility to protect* <<http://www.iciss.ca/pdf/Commission-Report.pdf>>.

15. Human Rights Watch. "Kenya recruits Somali refugees to fight Islamists back home in Somalia". HRW, 10 November 2009. <<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/11/16/kenya-recruits-somali-refugees-fight-islamists-back-home-somalia>>.

16. United Nations. *Sixth report of the Secretary-general on the Integrated Office in Burundi*, section IV epigraph K "Humanitarian situation". 30 November 2009 <<http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=S/2009/611>>.

America

Countries	Crisis factors
Colombia	Armed conflict, forced displacement
Guatemala	Economic crisis, food shortages

The economic crisis has left its mark on the American continent, where there has been a significant reduction in remittances, affecting the buying power of numerous households principally in Central America. Disasters have also created states of emergency in countries such as **El Salvador**, where Hurricane Ida left 100 people dead and 10,000 people without food, forcing the Government to declare a state of emergency and launch an emergency appeal for \$13 million to help the affected families. On the other hand, in **Guatemala**, the Government declared a state of emergency after persistent droughts aggravated the food insecurity levels. Between January and September 462 people died of hunger and 54,000 families were short of food in east of the country, an area known as the “dry corridor”. UNICEF warned that rates of malnutrition among the under-five children had reached 50%, and could rise to 80% in rural areas.

Food insecurity forced the Government to declare a state of emergency in Guatemala

In **Colombia** the displacement crisis went on for another year, and according to the latest CODHES figures, the numbers had increased by 24.4% compared to the last estimates, meaning that 4.5 million people were affected. Furthermore, figures provided by Refugees International said that one in 10 Colombians had been displaced through violence. The most affected areas continued to be those with Afro-Colombian communities as well as indigenous groups (Chocó, Nariño and Valle del Cauca) with an especially high rate of displacement in the indigenous Awa territories (38 members of this group died in 2009). In November OCHA announced the creation of an Emergency Response Fund for Colombia, with the aim of providing a more flexible response to crisis situations in the country, with the fund managed entirely from within Colombia. At the other extreme, the Colombian Senate rejected the Victims’ Rights Act, designed to provide better assistance to people affected by the armed conflict, arguing that the high cost of reparations and restitutions could not be assumed by the State. On the other hand, the aid offered to victims by the government body Acción Social was judged by the Constitutional Court to be insufficient.

Asia and the Pacific

Countries	Crisis factors
Afghanistan	Armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement
Philippines	Armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement

Myanmar	Armed conflict, forced displacement, epidemics
Nepal	Post-war situation, natural disasters, return of displaced people
Pakistan	Armed conflict, forced displacement
DPR Korea	Economic crisis, natural disasters, international isolation
Sri Lanka	Armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, population displacement caused by military operations against Taliban groups and Taliban attacks were the main cause for concern for the humanitarian community, together with the constantly rising number of attacks against members of NGOs and aid organizations. In January 2009 OCHA reopened its offices in **Afghanistan** because of the urgent need to coordinate the work of humanitarian and development agencies in the area. Problems generated on the one hand by the shrinking humanitarian space, and the confusion between humanitarian and military work, was a constant throughout the year, during which there were continued attacks against people carrying out aid work. There was little implementation of the Guidelines for the Interaction and Coordination of Humanitarian and Military Actors in Afghanistan,¹⁷ agreed in 2008 by agencies, NGOs and NATO. Lack of security led to the evacuation of some UN personnel. There were floods in the north and west of the country and an earthquake in the Nangahar province during the second quarter of the year.

In **Pakistan**, three members of UNHCR died in attacks by the Taliban that accused all of the humanitarian organizations of being anti-Islamic and demanded their withdrawal. In September it was estimated that 1.6 of the 2.3 million people displaced by military operations against the Taliban in the North-West Frontier Province had returned. However, violence resumed in this province and in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and it was estimated that across the country, about 900,000 people were displaced, of which practically half were from South Waziristan (FATA). The majority of people affected by displacement were hosted by relatives, as the Pakistan authorities didn’t find it safe to set up refugee camps, making the delivery of aid still more difficult. For safety reasons the Government also restricted humanitarian organizations’ access to the areas affected by the conflict, leaving the assistance of the most affected in the hands of the Pakistan authorities who were accused of diverting humanitarian aid.

More than 280,000 people were displaced in the north of **Sri Lanka** as a result of fighting between the Army and the armed group LTTE, whose defeat marked the end of the armed conflict. The internally displaced peo-

17. *Guidelines for the interaction and coordination of humanitarian actors and military actors in Afghanistan*. Approved on May 20, 2008 by UNAMA, ISAF-OTAN and close to 100 NGOs who coordinate humanitarian assistance in the country through the United Nations.

ple, principally ethnic Tamils, were caught in the cross-fire and later forced into settlement camps by the government. For several months the humanitarian organizations condemned the precarious situation of the people in these 44 camps, whose population was doubled its capacity in many cases. On grounds of national security, the Government restricted humanitarian personnel's access to the camps, saying that there were probably members of the LTTE among the camps' inhabitants. In September the authorities announced that they would allow some internally displaced people to leave, and from December 1 it allowed freedom of movement to all those held in camps. The Government presented a plan to assist people to return home and to rebuild houses in areas affected by the fighting. However, some people found it difficult to go back because of the presence of anti-personnel mines. In November it was estimated that 136,242 people remained in the camps, while almost 140,000 had returned.

It was estimated that about 900,000 people remained internally displaced in Pakistan

In the **Philippines**, the resumption of the armed conflict between the Army and the MILF forced 750,000 people to flee. At the end of the year, 250,000 remained displaced, living in highly unsanitary conditions in settlement camps, mainly in Mindanao Central. Fear prevented these people from going home, despite the resumption of peace talks. On October 27 the Government and the MILF reached an Agreement on the Protection of Civilian Component of the International Monitoring Team. Under the agreement, both sides committed to taking all the necessary precautions to avoid the loss of civilian lives and to prevent attacks that might harm the general population's interests, as well as facilitating access for humanitarian workers and the supply of aid material. At the same time, they agreed to expand the mandate of the International Monitoring Team to include protection of civilians and verification that both parties were complying with the accord. Various humanitarian agencies voiced their concern over the rise of inter-clan violence, known as *rido*, and the effects this might have on humanitarian assistance in the Mindanao region. WFP warned that half the population of the island was suffering from food insecurity and that rates of infant mortality and death in childbirth were respectively 30% and 80% higher than in the rest of the country. On the other hand, the serious impact of climatic phenomena since September forced the UN to launch an emergency appeal for \$143.7 million to help 4.2 million people affected by typhoons and tropical storms.

WFP said that 40% of people in **DPR Korea** would need external help to cope with food insecurity in the country. However, the small amount of funds committed by donors meant that the agency could only assist a quarter of these 9 million people. South Korea's resumption of food aid supplies (which were suspended in February 2008 in order to put pressure on Pyongyang to end its nuclear program) might ease the situation. In **Nepal**, several agencies said that the political instability might have a serious impact on the financing of development projects

and humanitarian aid, given that it reduced donor confidence. Some 60% of the national budget came from international funds. OCHA warned of the growing vulnerability of Nepalese communities, particularly in areas prone to natural disasters and where they suffered from food insecurity. The Working Group on internal displacement said more aid was needed for the resettlement of more than 50,000 people who did not wish to go home, given that the Government only had funded return programmes. At the same time in **Myanmar**, there was continuing displacement of people in the states of Shan and Karen, while reconstruction funds provided after the Nargis cyclone were insufficient for the recovery of the area and the implementation of early warning systems.

Middle East

Countries	Crisis factors
Iraq	Armed conflict, natural disasters, economic and political crisis
Palestine	Armed conflict, aid blocked, economic and political crisis
Yemen	Armed conflict, natural disasters, mass of refugees

The United Nations launched an emergency appeal for the reconstruction of **Gaza** after a 22-day Israeli offensive left 1,440 people dead, displaced half a million and left 21,000 families homeless. Throughout the year, there were constant demands on the part of NGOs and other agencies for the Israelis to lift the blockade on goods entering the Gaza Strip, which was creating difficulties for humanitarian aid and preventing the reconstruction of basic services such as drinking water supply. Various reports highlighted the serious impact of the blockade, imposed more than two years ago on a population where 75% of people go food insecure and 60% do not have a proper access to drinking water, as the majority of aquifers are contaminated, in some cases deliberately by the Israeli Government. According to an Amnesty International report, the Israelis only allowed Palestinians access to 20% of the main aquifers in the area and prevented part of this water from getting to Gaza, where people were forced to buy water from tankers or use the coastal aquifer, where 90% of the water is polluted.¹⁸ Other reports examined the humanitarian impact of the wall on the **West Bank**, five years after it was declared illegal by the International Court of Justice, while Oxfam International condemned both the international community and parties to the conflict for putting their strategic objectives above the needs and rights of the **Palestinian** people. In this respect, new Israeli settlements continued to be built in the Occupied Territories, as did the expulsion of Palestinians from East Jerusalem. Also, attempts by Hamas to control the distribution of aid in Gaza forced organizations to suspend their activity on the ground.

18. Amnesty International. *Demand Dignity: Troubled waters - Palestinians denied fair access to water*. AI, October 2009. <<http://www.amnesty.org/es/library/asset/MDE15/027/2009/es/41cff16c-a5b1-4fc7-abc0-142218e77047/mde150272009es.pdf>>.

Box 4.3. The Palestine emergency: seven years of wall, two years of blockade

In 2009, to coincide with the beginning of the blockade of the Gaza Strip two years ago and with the fifth anniversary of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice stating that the construction of the West Bank wall violates Israel's obligations under international law, the UN published two reports on the devastating impact that these measures were having on the Palestinian people.¹⁹ After Hamas took power in Gaza in June 2007, the Israeli Government imposed a blockade on all the Strip's frontier crossings, leaving 1.5 million people literally imprisoned in the territory and causing an unprecedented humanitarian emergency in the area. The continuing restrictions on the movement of people and goods were an added factor to the crisis in Gaza triggered by the Israeli military operation in December 2008, contributing significantly to a rise in the number of victims and making it almost impossible to restore basic services such as the water supply and sanitation.

In economic terms, the blockade has meant that exports from Gaza have been paralyzed, and imports reduced to a minimum. The restrictions on people's movements have also impeded agricultural work, fishing in Palestinian waters and access to people's places of work. Unemployment in Gaza is at 40% and 120,000 people have lost their jobs thanks to the shrinking of the economic sector. Some 75% of the population is food insecure. The lack of construction materials has prevented the rebuilding of houses and the reparation of electrical supplies and the water distribution network. More than 20,000 people remain internally displaced. Access to healthcare has also been affected by the scarcity of medical supplies in the Strip, thanks to the blockade, and to the difficulty in obtaining permission for patients to be treated abroad, thus increasing people's vulnerability.

The second report shows the impact of the construction of the West Bank wall, which began in April 2002. Some 58.3% of it is now complete, isolating around 10,000 people between the wall and the Green Line.²⁰ Once it is completed, 9.5% of the Occupied Territories will be inside this "security zone" which will affect the lives of 186,000 people who will be totally or partially isolated from the rest of the Palestinian territory. To this figure must be added the significant number of people whose economic activity is or will be affected because their land or workplaces are inside this security zone, to which access is strictly controlled and restricted by the Israeli authorities. The economic impact of the wall – which runs through ancient areas of Palestinian economic development, tourist centres and fertile land (more than 10% of the total in the area) – has led to a significant decrease in the incomes of the affected Palestinian families who have lost their harvests many times or have been obliged to sow fewer hectares, given restricted access to their land, for which they need a special permit which has to be renewed. To obtain this permit they have to prove that they are the owners of these lands in an area where the land forms part of the family inheritance and only on rare occasions has its title been registered. Among the other effects of the wall is the restricted access to health and education services, as well as the splitting up of families and social networks of communities that have become isolated between the walls.

The return of people displaced by the armed conflict and food insecurity were the humanitarian community's main topics of debate in **Iraq**. Since the beginning of the year, 141,150 internally displaced people – only 5% of the total – had voluntarily decided to return, along with fewer than 2% of Iraqi refugees (32,550 people), according to UNHCR figures up to October, and many organizations warned of the difficulties and the lack of sufficient support in the returning areas. A total of 37,513 families had received the Government's assistance packages. According to figures from the state agency Centre for Market Research and Consumer Protection, 60% of the population is dependent on food subsidized by the Government, which is not always of the best quality and is not always delivered to needy families in either a suitable manner or quantity, thus increasing food insecurity. The Centre said that 80% of food consumed by Iraqis was imported, making the country dependent on imports for its necessities and underlying that until the conflict began in 2003 Iraq enjoyed food sovereignty.

The deteriorating humanitarian situation in **Yemen** led OCHA to include the country within the Consolidated

Appeal Process for 2010. The resumption of the armed conflict in the north led to the displacement of more than 75,000 people and forced UN agencies to launch a new flash appeal in August for \$23 million. The number of displaced people in the area since the conflict began in 2004 rose to 175,000. Restricted access to the affected population and lack of security for humanitarian workers were the key elements in the Yemen crisis, with the added difficulty that the majority of the displaced people were not in camps and their dispersal complicates the duties of assistance. The creation in August of the High Level Inter-ministerial Committee for Relief Operations allowed the Government to open humanitarian corridors and to sign local cease-fires to facilitate access for humanitarian organizations. However, events such as the bombing of an IDP camp in September – in which 87 people died – and attacks on health facilities carried out by the Army, called in to question these expressions of goodwill. UNHCR reached an accord with Saudi Arabia to open a humanitarian corridor from the frontier. The same agency warned of the critical situation of the refugees and people seeking asylum in the country. Since the beginning of the year more than 50,000 people

Restricted access to the affected population and lack of security for humanitarian workers were the key elements in the Yemen crisis

19. OCHA OPT. *Five Years after the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion. A summary of the humanitarian impact of the barrier*. Jerusalem: United Nations, July 2009; and *Locked in: the humanitarian impact of two years of blockade on the Gaza Strip*, Jerusalem: United Nations, August 2009.

20. That Green Line was fixed in 1949 after the first Arab-Israeli war and drew the frontiers between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria as well as the dividing line between Israeli and Palestinian territories.

have arrived in Yemen, having crossed the Gulf of Aden, most of them from Somalia. Yemen was listed as the most food insecure country in the region, as it is highly dependent on imports. In this regard the rise of oil prices led to a rise in the price of staple foods, further affecting people's ability to cope.

4.3. Assessment of humanitarian action in 2009

What follows is an analysis of various aspects related to humanitarian crises and humanitarian action during 2009, specifically the main difficulties encountered by aid organizations and the role played by donor countries.²¹

a) Main difficulties of humanitarian action

It has been another year in which humanitarian organizations and workers have faced constant obstacles and threats in carrying out their work. There have been a significant number of direct attacks, kidnappings and fatalities among the humanitarian community. Although as yet no exact data exists, the security of humanitarian workers is particularly threatened in Somalia, Sudan and Chad, as well as in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Palestine Occupied Territories. It should be noted that attacks by military forces on health facilities, as in the case of Afghanistan, Palestine and Yemen, violates International Humanitarian Law which states that such areas are inviolable, as is the case with IDP and refugee camps which were also attacked in countries such as Chad and Sudan.

Governments repeatedly and deliberately obstructed humanitarian organizations' access to people affected by armed conflict in Ethiopia, the Philippines, Sudan, Sri Lanka and Pakistan although in each instance they gave different reasons for blocking access. While in Sudan it was born of a strategy of putting on pressure after the International Criminal Court ordered the arrest of their president, in Pakistan the Government said the lack of security in areas affected by the conflict meant they were not safe for agencies and organizations. On the other hand, in Sri Lanka and the Philippines the authorities viewed the victims as possible members of insurgent groups and by isolating them hoped to avoid aid being diverted to combatants.

There was a clear attempt by the authorities in the Philippines, Palestine and Pakistan to control aid. In the case of Palestine, after the Israeli military's *Operation Cast Lead*, the Hamas Government asked NGOs in Gaza to provide them with a list of all their beneficiaries in order to coordinate the aid operations although many organizations refused to comply because they feared it

would be used to deny assistance to presume Fatah supporters. Meanwhile, the official aid agencies in Pakistan aided mainly those they felt were closer to the Government, favouring some ethnic groups. In the Philippines, the Government imposed strict controls over the distribution of food to the displaced people of Maguindanao, and asked humanitarian organizations to reduce the rations they were distributing to people affected by the conflict avoiding the food was diverted to members of the armed group MILF. On the other hand, attempts by the Iraqi Government to control international funds destined to local organizations was strongly criticized by the NGOs in the country, which accused the State of putting into question their independence and neutrality. In **Somalia, US aid restrictions imposed to areas under the control of the armed Islamist group al-Shabab**, as part of its counterterrorist strategy, was one of the factors that led to the **closing of 12 WFP food centres in September**, which affected 100,000 children.

Humanitarian agencies and organizations were forced to either temporarily suspend their operations or withdraw their staff from the ground in practically all of the situations where violence prevailed, while a lack of coordination continued to be a serious problem in Afghanistan. In DR Congo, the Central African Republic, Chad and Sudan the lack of security was blamed on common criminals, whereas in Somalia and Pakistan insurgent groups were mainly responsible for the attacks. Areas of conflict where humanitarian organizations were explicitly barred from entering were in Ethiopia (Ogaden), Sudan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Yemen and Palestine.

Humanitarian agencies and organizations were forced to either temporarily suspend their operations or withdraw their staff from the ground in practically all of the situations where violence prevailed

The report published by the Humanitarian Policy Group on the risks faced by humanitarian workers said there was an increased by 61%, in relative numbers, in the number of attacks carried out against aid organizations, demolishing the theory that the rise in violence was due to an increased number of these organizations on the ground.²² In a clear indication that humanitarian personnel are the targets of armed groups, in 2008 the number of humanitarian workers killed exceeded that of the number of peace-keeping troops. Humanitarian workers have been explicitly singled out as targets in Pakistan and Somalia, where they were accused of spreading

ideas and practices contrary to Islam, while in DR Congo there was double the number of attacks on humanitarian personnel compared to the previous year, with more than 100.

August 19 marked the **first World Humanitarian Day**, through which the United Nations wanted to raise the profile of aid work and humanitarian crisis situations throughout the world. The date was chosen to commemorate the 2003 attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad (Iraq) in which 22 people died, among them the person then responsible for the organization's humani-

21. Humanitarian action is understood as all the activities whose aim is to save lives and alleviate suffering in humanitarian crisis situations. These activities are guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. Humanitarian action also includes the protection of civilians and the provision of basic aid.

22. Stoddard, Abby, Adele Harper and Victoria Didomenico. *Providing aid in insecure environments: 2009 update*. Humanitarian Policy Group, London: Overseas Development Institute, April, 2009. <www.cic.nyu.edu/Lead%20PDF/HPG_2009&20.pdf>.

tarian action, Sergio Vieira de Melho. On that day Ali Abdussalam Treki, the president of the UN General Assembly, condemned the increase in attacks on humanitarian personnel, reminding member states that, according to International Humanitarian Law, they were obliged to protect such people during the carrying out of their duties and to facilitate access to people affected by emergencies.

On the same occasion, a number of analysts and bodies (the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, Humanitarian Policy Group and the Feinstein Centre) warned of the progressive reduction of the humanitarian space and the danger this implied for those responsible for aid work, as there was a tendency for greater integration between the political and humanitarian agendas in the context of armed conflict or social tension. This integration was regarded as one of the key factors contributing to the increase in attacks on humanitarian workers.²³

b) The role of donors

In November 2008 the OCHA Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) focused on 10 humanitarian emergen-

cies and asked for \$7 billion – almost double that of 2007 – in order to help 30 million people in 31 countries during 2009. In the same period, Humanitarian Action Plan were drawn up to deal with the crises in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Kenya, and seven flash appeals were launched,²⁴ five fewer than in 2008. Of these flash appeals, only two were related to situations of conflict or socio-political crisis (Madagascar and Yemen), while the rest were to deal with natural disasters sometimes combined with political instability or violence as was the case with the Philippines.

By the end of the year the donors had only committed 64% of the necessary funds to finance the CAP and the flash appeals for 2009, although the total figure obtained, \$6.3 billion, was the biggest the CAP had ever achieved since it was established. To this it should be added that the financial disparity between the different appeals was the least recorded by the CAP, so that the majority got 60 or 70% of their request, with the exception of Côte d'Ivoire. However, if the same analysis is made per sector there is considerable disparity, with 83% of the financing destined to food sector and 35% for the safety and security of the staff and operations (although the amount requested for the latter was 50

Box 4.4. Humanitarian worker: a high-risk profession

Offering humanitarian assistance and basic services to people affected by conflicts in violent situations has in recent years become a high-risk profession for aid workers. This was revealed in a report by the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) in 2009 which says that, during 2008, 260 humanitarian workers were killed, making it the deadliest of the last 12 years.²⁵

Although one of the arguments commonly put forward to explain this rise is the increased presence of humanitarian organizations on the ground, HPG dismisses this theory, showing that in the past three years and in relative numbers –that is to say, taking into account the number of workers involved in the operations– this still represents a 61% increase in the number of attacks. In fact, more humanitarian workers were killed in 2008 than soldiers involved in UN peacekeeping missions during the same period. This raises questions about the motives of those who target humanitarian workers whose task is aiding civilian victims of conflict. The answer is clear: in the eyes of the aggressors in many cases humanitarian organizations are not independent, neutral or impartial, principles to which they must adhere. At the same time, when one of the main strategies of war is to lay siege to a civilian population anyone who seeks to assist the civilians automatically becomes an enemy.

In this regard, the HPG report points to a growing political motivation behind the attacks which go beyond assaults carried out by armed elements to steal humanitarian supplies or logistical material. It also points to the growing level of cooperation between criminal organizations and armed groups in the kidnapping of international personnel, a practice which seeks, apart from a large ransom, to increase the visibility of a conflict or a group's demands. This situation is particularly significant in Afghanistan and Somalia, and recently in Pakistan. Demonstrating impartiality, neutrality and independence has become a difficult task, partly because those NGOs that work in violent situations sometimes need military escorts to deliver aid to isolated populations. Furthermore, the use of humanitarian action as a strategy by political groups, national Armed Forces or occupying powers, or by the State itself, only increases the confusion. In general, aid organizations are perceived as part of the Western agenda in many conflict situations, as is the case in Afghanistan, and efforts to show their supposed independence don't always succeed.

The places with the highest level of attacks against humanitarian personnel are Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan (Darfur). As well as the growing number of attacks that have caused deaths, another worrying trend is the increasing number of kidnappings. Regarding the nationality of the victims, the majority are local people, although in recent years there has been a slight rise in the number of expatriates targeted, mainly from NGOs.

Together with strategies to demonstrate independence, another way of increasing security is the rapprochement and the dialogue with the armed elements to ensure that they accept the presence and work of the humanitarian organizations. In spite of the difficulties entailed in this and the need to regularly renew such commitments, the data available at the HPG report shows that this strategy brings results, although it doesn't mean that attacks may always be avoided.

23. IRIN, "Analysis: humanitarian action under siege", IRIN 18 August 2009. <<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85752>>.

24. Flash appeals are those launched by Governments via the United Nations in order to provide a response to a humanitarian emergency. They last for six months but can be extended.

25. Stoddard, op. cit.

times less than the amount asked for in regard to food). In this context, **OCHA emphasised the necessity for donors to be more flexible and to allow the organizations to distribute the funding between the different sectors in order to provide a comprehensive response to the emergency**, avoiding having funds allocated for a particular sector. For example, the response to a food insecurity emergency does not only involve the distribution of food but also the improvement of food production, educational access for children, better sanitation and health facilities, etc.

In December, global humanitarian funding reached \$10,366 billion,²⁶ \$1,756 billion less than in 2008, which OCHA blamed on the world economic recession, although underlining that the crisis had not seriously affected the capacity of the donor countries. For their part, organizations that depend on private donations saw a significant reduction of funding in 2009. However, **the flash appeals were the most affected ones**, having only achieved an average of 49.8% of funding, compared to 68.8% achieved in 2008, although the funds requested were less than those of the previous year.

Finally, the main donor countries in relation to their GDP were in general European, led by Luxembourg, Sweden, Monaco, Norway and Denmark. Kuwait was the first non-Western country on the list, in 13th place, above countries such as the US, Germany and Spain. In

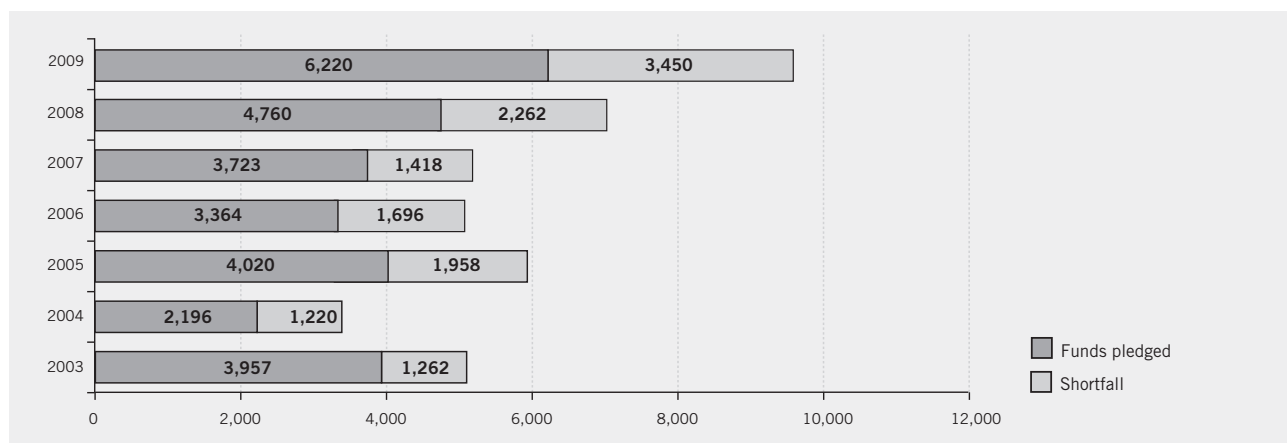
general, most countries' donations shrank in correlation to their GDP, with official aid levels tied to internal economic growth. Next year, as stringent financial conditions are expected to continue, will put to the test the will of countries to continue to provide humanitarian aid, and whether they make it a priority and make the protection of the planet's population as a whole as important for governments as protecting their own citizens.

Donors had only committed 64% of the necessary funds to finance the humanitarian appeals for 2009

In a report issued with the annual CAP appeal OCHA makes special reference to slow-onset crises, in which a combination of accumulated factors together with a situation of chronic vulnerability create scarcely visible humanitarian emergencies, often confused with development needs, which require a coordinated response. The

humanitarian crises in Madagascar or in West African countries are examples of this type of emergency. In these cases, food insecurity is not only caused by poor harvests, but by price rises, a fall in incomes and rising unemployment which reduces people's capacity to buy food. Organizations insist on the necessity to send emergency funds to places that face this situation, although donors may be confused that no natural or human disaster has caused the emergency. For this reason OCHA also wants emergency actions to include early recovery projects to reduce the gap between humanitarian and developmental activities, so as to bring together both types of action.

Graph 4.2. Humanitarian funding overview (in millions of dollars)



Source: OCHA. Humanitarian Appeal 2010. Consolidated Appeal Process, November 2009.

26. Figures provided by OCHA Financial Track Service [accessed 23.12.2009] <<http://www.reliefweb.int/fts>>.