



LOCATION

Preferences and duration

In 2014, the latest year for which data is available, the recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance were generally a familiar group. Three in particular – Palestine, Ethiopia and Afghanistan – have been among the 10 recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance for 10 consecutive years.

Humanitarian funding is increasingly concentrated in a relatively small group of crises. In 2015, five crises – in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, Iraq and Sudan – accounted for more than half of all funding allocated to specific emergencies, in contrast to 2011 and 2012, when the five largest crises received one-third of the total.

Just as the list of the recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance often features the same countries year on year, so does the annual list of neglected emergencies – crises that are persistently underfunded. The priority crises in the EC's Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)'s Forgotten Crisis Assessment index for 2015 included Algeria/Western Sahara and Myanmar, both of which

have appeared on the index every year since 2004. The Libya conflict and the refugee crisis in Egypt appeared for the first time in 2015.

Distinct types of crises or different geographic areas attract different responses from donors. For example, donors in the Middle East and North of Sahara region generally gave most to crises in their own region.

In 2014, the vast majority (91%) of official humanitarian assistance from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors went to long- and medium-term recipients, with long-term recipients receiving 61% of total country-allocable official humanitarian assistance and medium-term recipients receiving 29%. While there is a strong and compelling rationale for more multi-annual humanitarian planning and financing in these contexts, indications suggest that the volumes remain modest overall.

Recipients of international

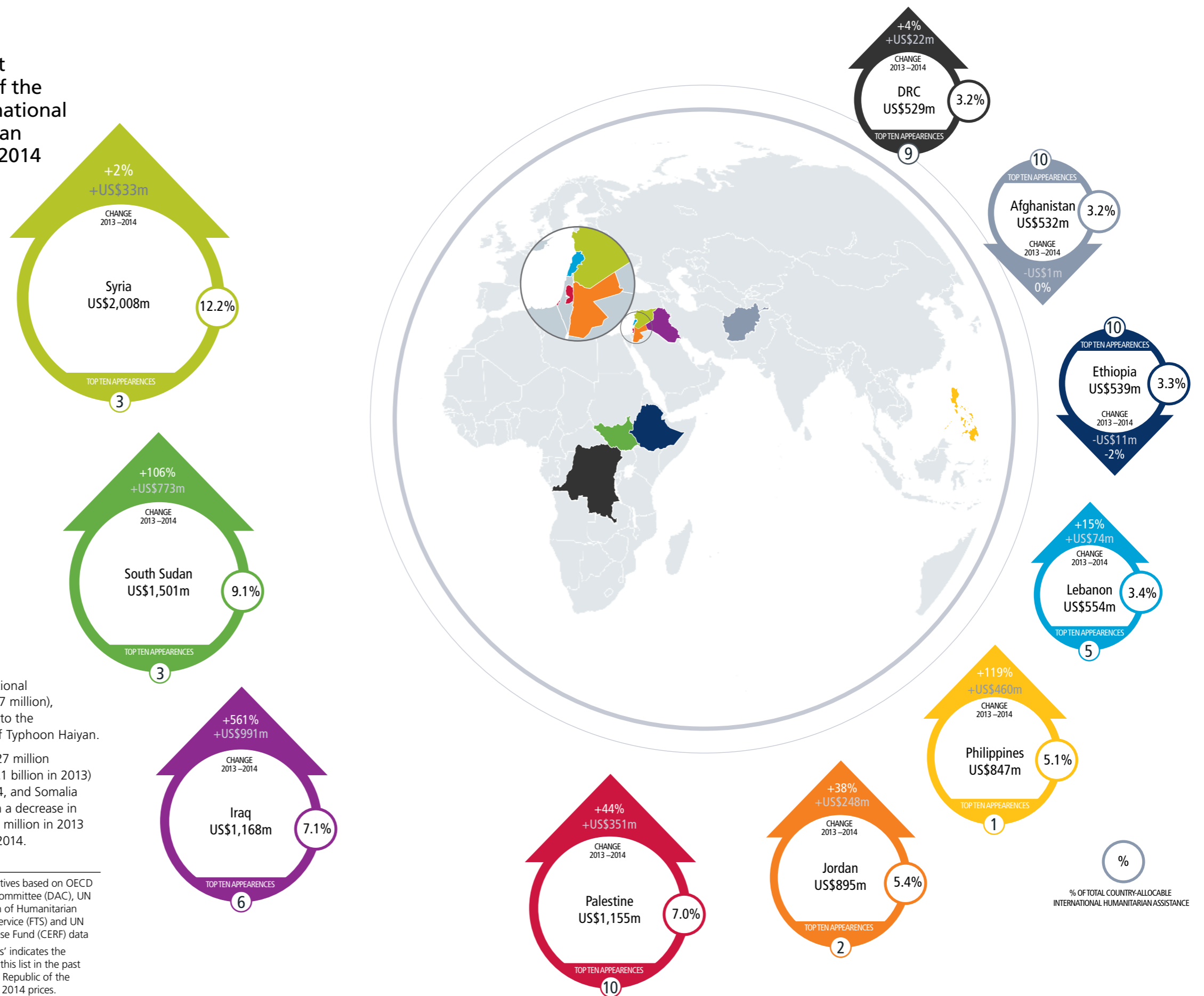
A total of 145 countries received international humanitarian assistance in 2014 (the latest year for which the most comprehensive data is available). The volumes received ranged from US\$2 billion for Syria¹ at one end of the spectrum to US\$10,000 for the Seychelles at the other. The 10 recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance accounted for 59% of country-allocated international humanitarian assistance in 2014. This trend is consistent with recent years, during which most funding has been concentrated in a relatively small group of countries (see *Concentration of funding* section on page 59). Four countries received upwards of US\$1 billion of assistance in 2014.

In the group of the 10 recipients of the most humanitarian assistance in 2014, funding related to the Syria crisis accounted for 36% of their combined total, with US\$3.5 billion of international assistance going to Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. Five of the 10 countries were in the Middle East and North of Sahara region: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine, accounting for US\$5.8 billion – 35% of country-allocated international humanitarian assistance that year. Three of the 10 countries were in sub-Saharan Africa: South Sudan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with combined contributions of US\$2.6 billion – 16% of the total international humanitarian assistance allocated to countries in 2014.

The 10 countries that received the most international humanitarian assistance in 2014 are broadly consistent with recent years. Three of the 10 countries in 2014 have been on the list every year since 2005: Palestine (received US\$1.2 billion in 2014); Ethiopia (US\$539 million); and Afghanistan (US\$532 million). The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which received US\$529 million of international humanitarian funding in 2014, has been on the list in nine of the last 10 years.

Two new countries appeared on the list in 2014. Iraq last appeared in 2009 and returned in 2014 because of escalating conflict and displacement. The Philippines appeared for the first time in the last 10 years, due

FIGURE 5.1
10 recipient countries of the most international humanitarian assistance, 2014



to significant international contributions (US\$847 million), primarily in response to the devastating effects of Typhoon Haiyan.

Sudan received US\$527 million (compared with US\$1.1 billion in 2013) putting it 11th in 2014, and Somalia became the 12th with a decrease in funding from US\$549 million in 2013 to US\$504 million in 2014.

Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) data

Notes: 'Top 10 appearances' indicates the number of appearances in this list in the past 10 years. DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo. Data is in constant 2014 prices.

Humanitarian funding to address risk

International financing can complement national and regional efforts to strengthen early warning and reduce disaster risk. However, there is no comprehensive data available on how much is spent globally on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster prevention and preparedness (DPP).

In DAC-reported official development assistance (ODA), DPP is included as a sector under humanitarian assistance.² As such, it does not capture additional investments in risk reduction delivered through other reported development assistance and so represents only one component of the total international effort. It also does not capture DRR and DPP spending that may be mainstreamed in other types of projects.

Bearing these limitations in mind, the total amount of official humanitarian

assistance reported as DPP by all donors reporting to the OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS) has increased significantly in the last five years – from US\$506 million in 2010 to US\$981 million in 2014. The proportion of funding spent on DPP has also increased over this period from less than 4% of official humanitarian assistance in 2010 to 6% by 2014, though this may be partially explained by changes in reporting practices.

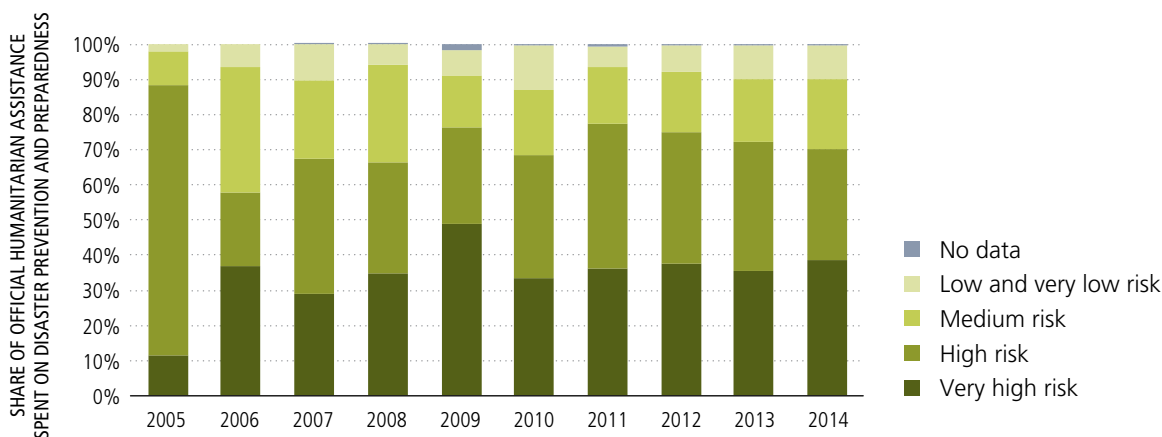
Not all of this spending is allocated by country. A quarter (25%) in 2014 was allocated at regional and global levels, highlighting the importance of multi-lateral approaches to risk (see Chapter 2).³ Beyond this, DPP spending was allocated to 139 countries in 2014, though largely concentrated in a smaller sub-set of countries. Four countries – India, Bangladesh, Turkey and the

Philippines – together received over a third (34%) of all country-allocated DPP humanitarian ODA spending that year.

When mapped against indicators of exposure to natural hazards from INFORM’s Index for Risk Management, as shown in Figure 5.2, official humanitarian assistance spending on DPP, while low, does appear to generally align with those countries most at risk. The 12 countries considered to be at highest risk of disasters caused by natural hazards received 39% of country-allocable DPP spending in 2014, compared with 10% for the 42 countries with low and very low levels of risk. This pattern of spending has remained broadly similar for the last five years, with countries at high or very high risk of disasters receiving the greatest share of funding every year since 2010.

FIGURE 5.2

Official humanitarian assistance for disaster prevention and preparedness categorised by level of natural hazard risk, 2005–2014



Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD Development Assistance Committee Creditor Reporting System and INFORM data
 Notes: Risk classifications based on INFORM natural hazard exposure scores at fixed thresholds. Amounts based on country-allocable gross disbursements only. Additional amounts not allocable by country are excluded.

Forgotten crises

While some crises attract considerable attention and thereafter large amounts of international humanitarian assistance, others remain persistently underfunded and 'forgotten'. Despite strong evidence of vulnerability and humanitarian need, these crises are routinely missing from international media headlines and repeatedly absent from the list of countries receiving the most humanitarian assistance (see *Donor preferences*, page 60).

ECHO's Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) index is one of the most widely recognised tools for identifying and responding to 'neglected' emergencies. This uses the INFORM Index for Risk Management indicators of risk, combined with an assessment of media coverage, donor interest and other qualitative analysis, to rank countries according to the most 'forgotten crises'.⁴ ECHO then uses this list to inform its own funding allocations to countries. The list is also used to direct ECHO's targeted outreach to others – both internally to relevant EU services and externally in its advocacy with other donors and partners.

A number of crises appear in ECHO's FCA index year on year, representing an entrenched set of neglected situations. Forgotten crises often affect particular minority groups within a country, such as the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria and ethnic minorities in Myanmar. Both of these crises have appeared on the index every year since 2004 – a total of 13 appearances. Other crises to frequently appear on the index include ongoing

conflict in India's north-east, which has featured in 12 out of the last 13 years; conflict and displacement in Colombia (10 consecutive appearances); and the treatment of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, which has featured in 9 of the last 10 years. All of these crises remained on the index in 2015.

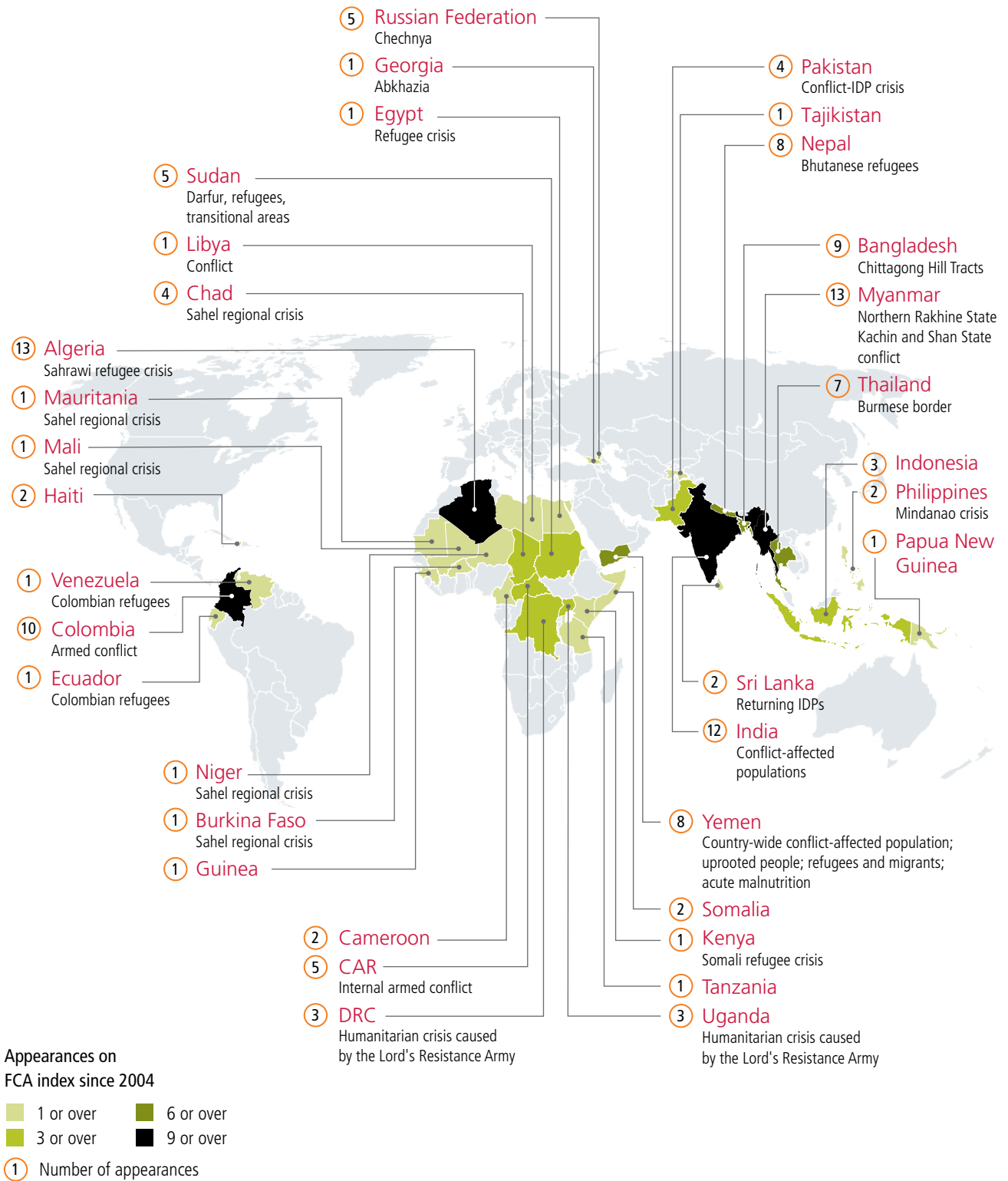
Two new crises appeared on the index for the first time in 2015: the Libya conflict and the refugee crisis in Egypt. A significant rise in conflict-related displacement in Mindanao⁵ led to a reappearance on the index for the Philippines in 2015, having last featured in 2009.

Mechanisms to identify and respond to under-served emergencies include the underfunded emergencies window of the UN-managed Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the non-governmental organisation (NGO)-led START Fund. Between 2011 and 2015, 35% of CERF allocations were provided through the underfunded emergency window with the intention of bolstering emergency response in situations where funding is scarce but risk levels are high.⁶ The START Fund⁷ also aims to respond to small- and medium-scale crises that receive insufficient funding or attention from other existing funding mechanisms or donors. See Chapter 6 for more about each fund.

A number of crises appear in ECHO's Forgotten Crisis Assessment index year on year, representing an entrenched set of neglected situations.

FIGURE 5.3

Countries appearing most frequently in the ECHO Forgotten Crisis Assessment index since 2004



Source: Development Initiatives based on the EC's Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) index
 Notes: CAR: Central African Republic; DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo; IDP: internally displaced person.

Concentration of funding

A small number of major emergencies, or ‘mega crises’,⁸ have dominated international humanitarian response in recent years. These include, but are not limited to, ‘Level 3’ emergencies – those designated by the UN’s Emergency Relief Coordinator to need additional leadership, capacity and resources to respond due to exceptional circumstances.⁹ According to funding reported to OCHA’s FTS, in 2015, five emergencies – Syria, Yemen, South

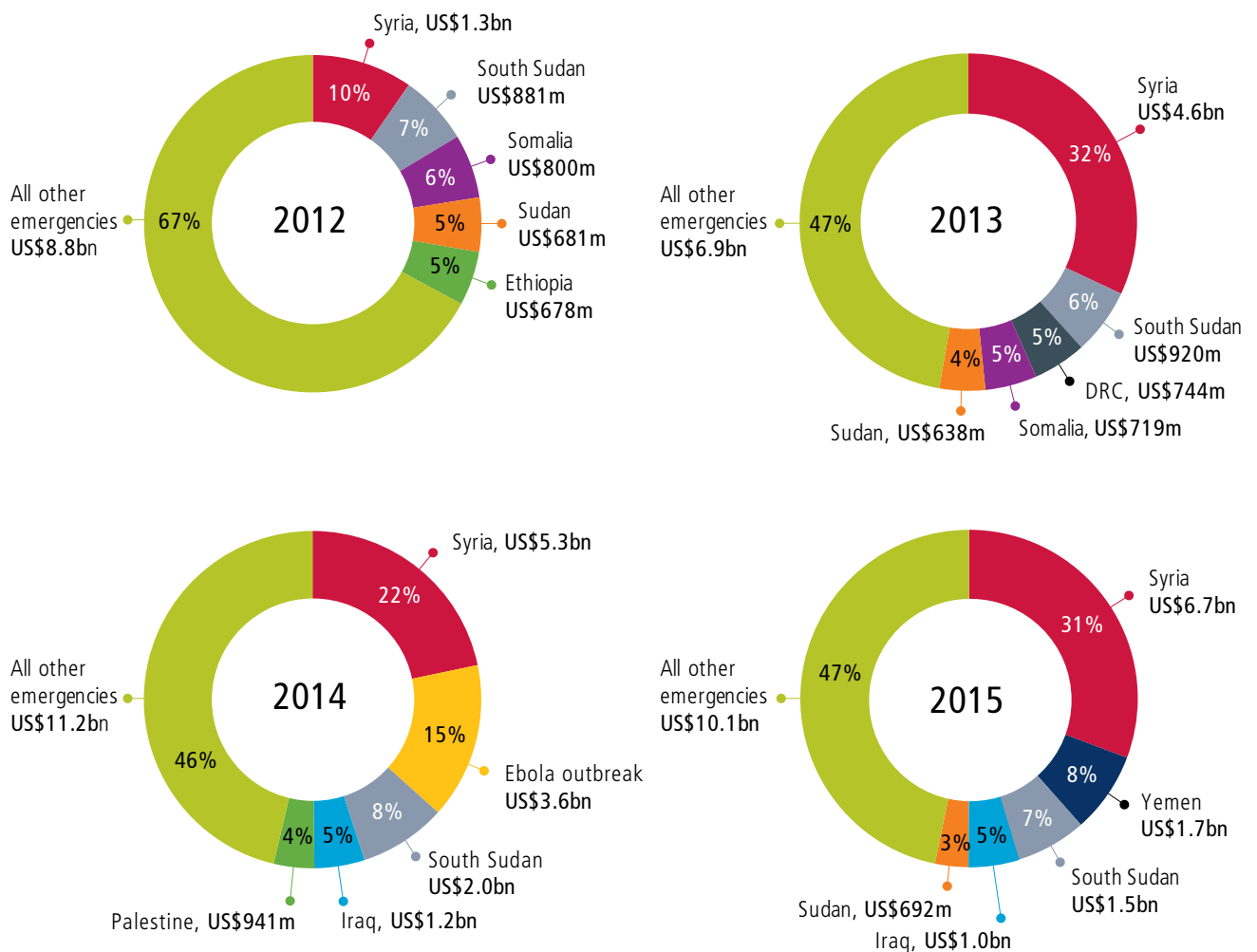
Sudan, Iraq and Sudan – accounted for more than half of all funding allocated to specific emergencies (53% or US\$11.6 billion). This shows an increased concentration of funding from 2012, when five emergencies received a third of all country-specific humanitarian funding.

Given the protracted nature of the dominant crises in 2015, the concentration of resources is unlikely to diminish significantly in the

immediate future. This relatively predictable pull on resources should make it possible to plan ahead. Coordination between donors and pre-emptive choices about the allocation of resources could help to save lives and facilitate a more cost-effective response, as well as mitigate the negative effect on smaller or ‘forgotten’ emergencies of this concentration of funding on the mega crises (see *Forgotten crises*, page 57).¹⁰

FIGURE 5.4

Five emergencies receiving the most international humanitarian assistance reported to the UN OCHA FTS, 2012–2015



Source: Development Initiatives based on UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) data
 Notes: Totals shown are by crisis rather than country and, in the cases of Syria and Yemen, funding is for the regional crises. Data is in constant 2014 prices.

Donor preferences

Different types of crises in different parts of the world attract different responses from donors. A breakdown of the sources of funding for the 10 recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance in 2015 demonstrates distinct geographic preferences between different donor regions.

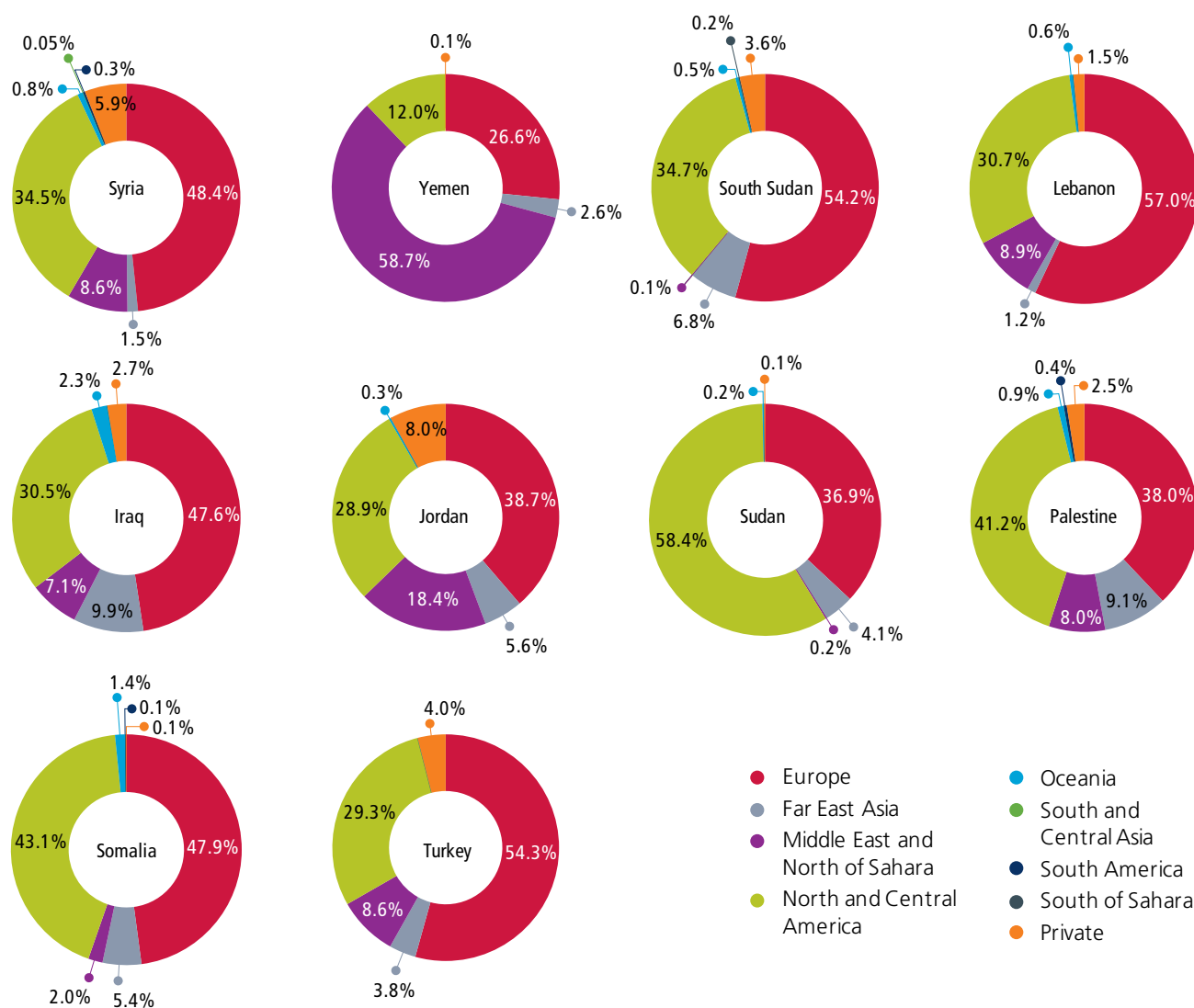
International humanitarian assistance from government donors in the

Middle East and North of Sahara region in 2015 was generally highest to countries in their own region. They gave their largest combined reported contributions to the six countries within the group in the Middle East and North of Sahara region (Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine). Middle East and North of Sahara donors provided the largest share of international humanitarian assistance

to Yemen, with the two donors who provided the most – Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – providing just less than half (49% or US\$826 million) of all FTS-reported funding to the crisis. However, for the other nine of the 10 recipients of the most funding in 2015, donors in North and Central America and Europe provided the two largest regional sources of funding.

FIGURE 5.5

Funding by donor region to the 10 recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance, 2015



Source: Development Initiatives based on UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) data

Notes: The 10 recipients of the most humanitarian assistance for 2015 are based on funding reported to UN OCHA FTS only. Private figures are based on FTS data, not on Development Initiatives' dataset for private funding. OECD country naming has been used for regions, with the exception of Middle East and North of Sahara which has been combined.

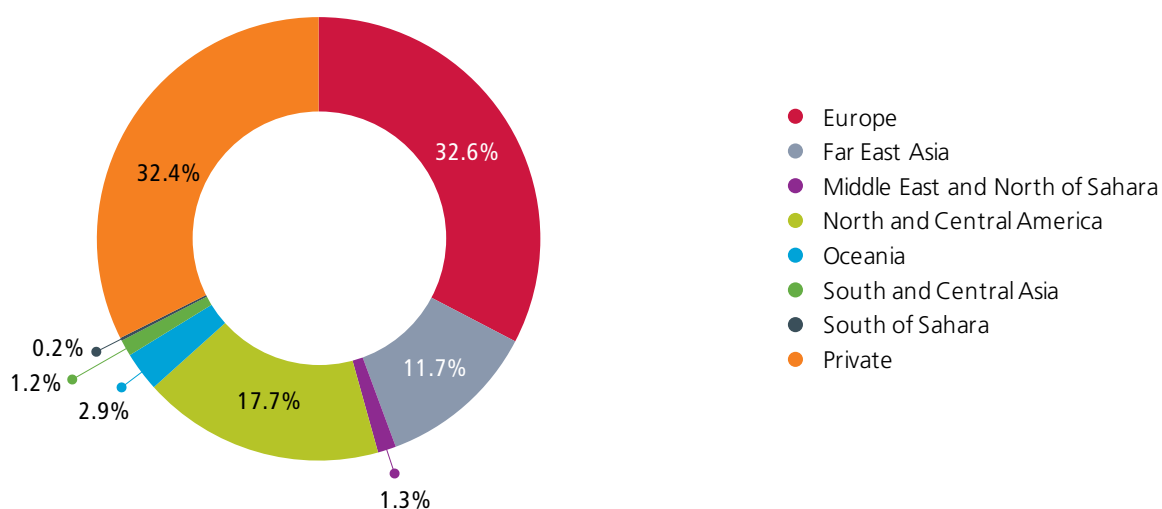
Europe as a region showed the most even spread of funding to the 10 recipients of the most funding in 2015; while of the individual donor governments, the United States (US) showed the least variation between recipients. The US also contributed the most to nine of the 10 recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance in 2015 (with the exception of Yemen).

Private donors tend to favour responses to disasters caused by natural hazards (with the exception of the Syria crisis – see Chapter 4). Nepal received the 11th largest amount of international humanitarian assistance in 2015 following the earthquake in April that year. Private donors provided just under a third (32%) of all humanitarian assistance reported to the FTS for the Nepal earthquake, amounting to US\$169 million.

Resource allocation on the basis of humanitarian needs continues to be a grounding principle for many donors.¹¹ However, it is clear that many other factors also play a part in donor decision-making – including stated policy priorities and commitments to particular regions, sectors or themes; as well as other factors, such as geographic proximity, historical ties, language and culture.¹² Some donor coordination groups exist at both country and global levels to gather and share information on donor priorities and practice. However, there is currently no formal or comprehensive way of coordinating donor responses to promote a ‘division of labour’ and avoid a concentration of funding to some crises and the entrenched neglect of others.¹³

FIGURE 5.6

Funding by donor region to Nepal, 2015



Source: Development Initiatives based on Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Financial Tracking Service (FTS) data

Notes: Private figures are based on FTS data, not on Development Initiatives' dataset for private funding.

Crisis types

The causes and symptoms of humanitarian crises are diverse and often intertwined. Typologies of crises have categorised crises by their *cause* – such as violent conflict, natural hazards and disease (or often a combination of such factors);¹⁴ or the *symptoms* experienced by populations affected by crisis – including, for example, hunger or displacement.¹⁵ Other typologies focus on categorising situations according to the *context* – limited access to affected populations, for example, or the capacity of national actors to lead the response;¹⁶ or on the *duration and frequency* of the crisis, comparing, for example, rapid-onset emergencies with protracted and recurrent crises.

Figure 5.7 uses data from the UN OCHA FTS in 2015 to categorise recipient countries of international humanitarian funding according to major causes and symptoms of crises. These are simplified into three categories: conflict situations; disasters caused by natural hazards; and refugee-hosting settings.¹⁷

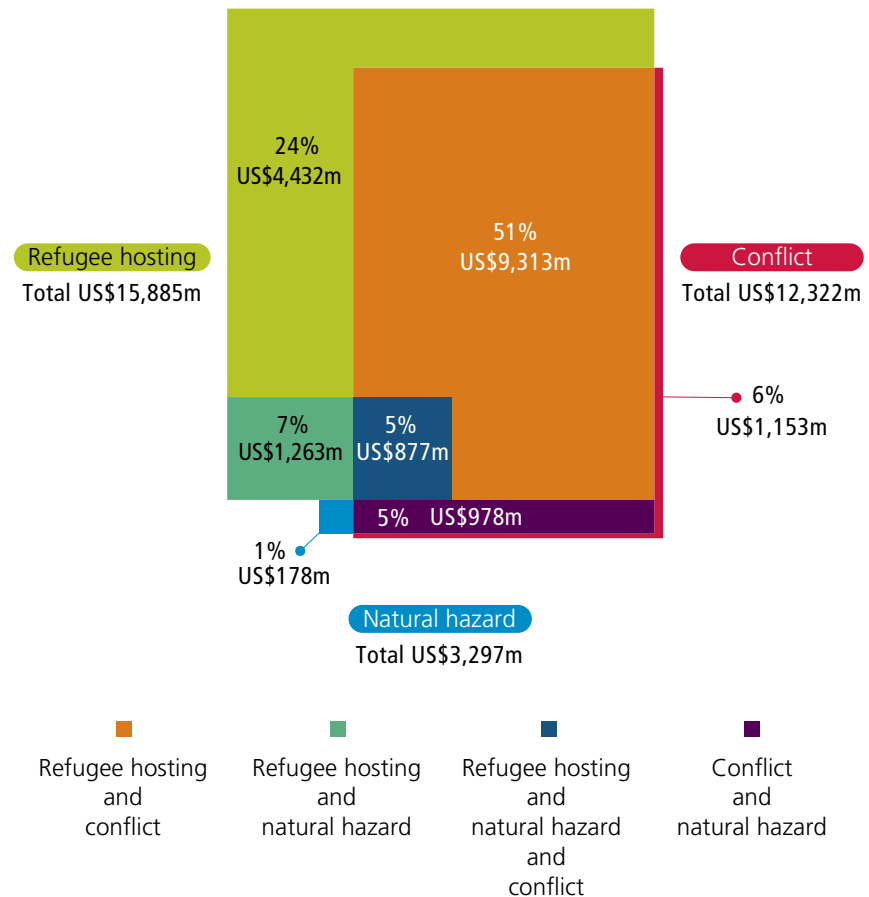
In 2015, 87% of reported humanitarian funding went to countries hosting large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers from other countries. This includes 51% to countries that were also affected by conflicts, including Yemen, South Sudan and Iraq; and 7% to countries also at risk of disasters caused by natural hazards, in places such as Nepal and Mozambique.

Over two-thirds (67%) of funding reported to the FTS in 2015 was spent in countries currently affected by conflict. Most of these were also hosting refugees from other countries (51%) or facing high disaster risk (5%), or both (5%). Only 6% of reported funding went to countries where conflict alone was the primary crisis type, such as in the Central African Republic and Ukraine, though both countries have large internally displaced populations.

In 2015, 18% of reported contributions went to countries affected by or highly prone to disasters caused by natural hazards. This includes a small proportion – just 1% – that went to countries affected by disasters only, in contexts such as Vanuatu. Otherwise, 5% of funding was spent in contexts where there was significant conflict–disaster overlap, such as Somalia, Colombia,

FIGURE 5.7

International humanitarian assistance to countries by crisis type, 2015



Sources: Development Initiatives based on UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Financial Tracking Service, INFORM, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) data

Notes: For refugee-hosting country coding, UNHCR and UNRWA data has been used, with a threshold of 20,000 people and above. For conflict-affected countries, INFORM's 'Current conflict intensity' component score has been used, with a threshold of 7 and above. For natural hazard-affected countries, INFORM's 'Natural hazard' category has been used, with a threshold of 4.8 and above. For full methodology notes see *Methodology and definitions*. Data is in constant 2014 prices.

Myanmar and the Philippines; 7% was spent in disaster-prone countries hosting large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers; and 5% was spent in countries simultaneously affected by all three (disaster, conflict and refugee-hosting), such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The complexity of most humanitarian response settings demonstrates the need for multi-faceted and adaptable financing modalities. The need to move

beyond a 'one size fits all' approach is evident¹⁸ – not just between countries but also within them, recognising that people at different subnational levels and at different points in time often face distinct risks and shocks. Depending on the context and existing capacities, this means layering of different sources of financing, modalities and instruments (see Figure 2.1) according to their comparative advantage to address the various dimensions of risk and need.

Long- and medium-term international humanitarian assistance

Humanitarian assistance may be required to respond quickly to sudden changes in need and as such is often narrowly perceived as being only short-term in nature. In reality, however, crisis vulnerability and humanitarian needs are seldom short-lived and the assistance provided is rarely a quick-fix intervention. The data shows that disasters caused by natural hazards affect the same regions, countries and communities time and time again, often on a cyclical basis (see Chapter 1). Data also shows that most people displaced by conflict remain displaced for protracted periods – often for between 10 and 20 years.¹⁹

Funding disbursed through a range of financing instruments over a longer period is required to enable a sustained response to chronic or recurrent needs. In 2014, almost two-thirds (61%) of official humanitarian assistance from OECD DAC donors went to long-term recipients – those in receipt of an above average share of their ODA in the form of humanitarian assistance for eight years or more. A further 29% went to

medium-term recipients who met the same criteria for between three and seven years. Combined, this means that the vast majority – just over 91% – of official humanitarian assistance went to long- and medium-term recipients in 2014, continuing a trend of recent years. Long- and medium-term recipients also often received the most international humanitarian assistance. Almost all (19 of 20) of the recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance in 2014 were either long-term (13) or medium-term (6) recipient countries.

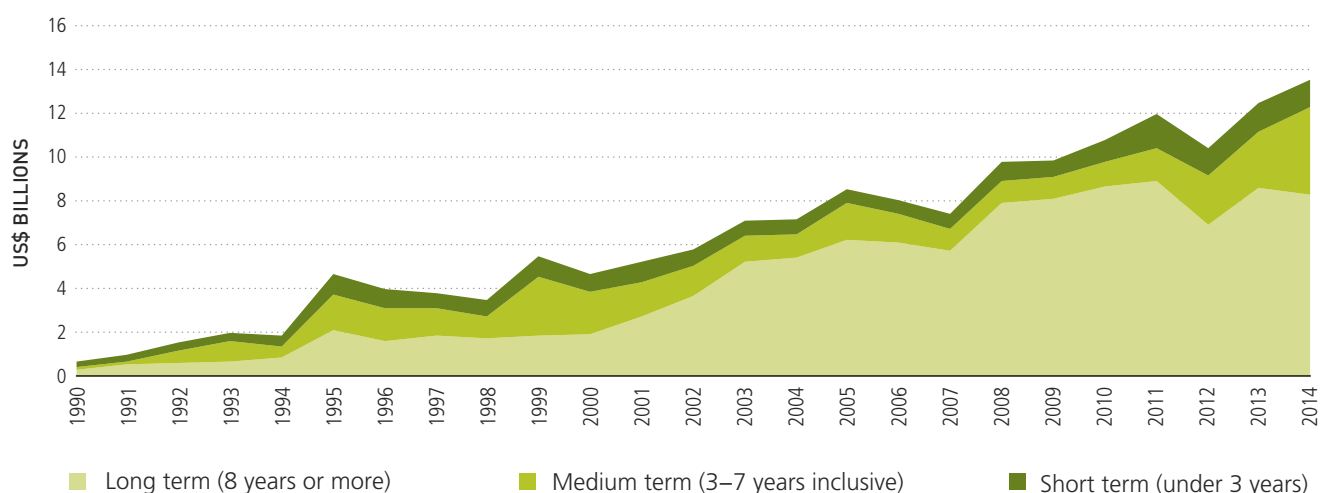
As Chapter 1 explores in more detail, poverty and vulnerability to crises are mutually reinforcing. Indeed, many medium- and long-term recipients of humanitarian assistance are countries with high poverty rates and low levels of domestic spending. Of the 19 long- and medium-term recipients that featured among the 20 recipients of the most international humanitarian assistance in 2014, seven had over a third of their populations living below the international poverty line²⁰ and

of these, five had over half. Four of these countries are also among the 10 countries with the lowest government expenditure per capita globally – all below PPP\$300 (2014), and in the case of the DRC and the Central African Republic, below PPP\$100 (2014).²¹

New solutions are clearly needed to build resilience and reduce the impact of crises on the most vulnerable people. International humanitarian assistance is neither sufficient nor appropriate to address the full spectrum of these needs.²² As explored in Chapters 2 and 4, many other financing tools and approaches exist, and several others are in the pipeline, to both prevent and respond to crises. Used alongside appropriately sustained and predictable humanitarian assistance (see *Multi-year funding overleaf*), and with a clear focus on the most vulnerable populations, these different funding streams and mechanisms should work together to address the risks and needs of affected populations.

FIGURE 5.8

Long-, medium- and short-term recipients of official humanitarian assistance, 1990–2014



Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD Development Assistance Committee and UN Central Emergency Response Fund data

Notes: Long-, medium- or short-term classification is determined by the length of time the country has received an above-average share of its ODA in the form of humanitarian assistance. Calculations are based on shares of country-allocable humanitarian assistance. Data is in constant 2014 prices.

Multi-year funding

With growing recognition that most humanitarian crises are protracted or recurrent and the majority of humanitarian assistance is provided year on year over the medium to long term (see previous page), there is a strong and compelling rationale for more multi-annual humanitarian planning and financing. However, implementation continues to be challenging.

The idea of multi-year planning and resource mobilisation for UN-coordinated appeals has gathered pace in recent years; in 2015, 15 of 31²³ were multi-annual appeals.²⁴ However, the extent to which projects in these appeals are genuinely multi-year – rather than repeated single-year interventions – is unclear. For example, last year OCHA estimated that only 9% of the 527 projects within the Sahel Humanitarian Response Plan 2014–2016 could be legitimately classified as multi-year.²⁵

While many donors are able to commit funding over a multi-year period in principle (16 out of 29 OECD DAC donors in a recent study);²⁶ for others, annually determined budgets and legal restrictions make awarding multi-year

MULTI-YEAR HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Multi-year humanitarian assistance is becoming more prevalent in certain contexts, providing a predictable flow of resources over longer time-frames and probably facilitating more cost-efficient and effective ways of working. For example, multi-year funding to WFP has grown steadily in recent years, from

around US\$200 million in 2011 to US\$591 million in 2014, by which time WFP had multi-year agreements in place with 12 government donors.²⁹ In 2014, 10.6%³⁰ of total donor contributions to WFP were received as part of multi-year funding agreements.

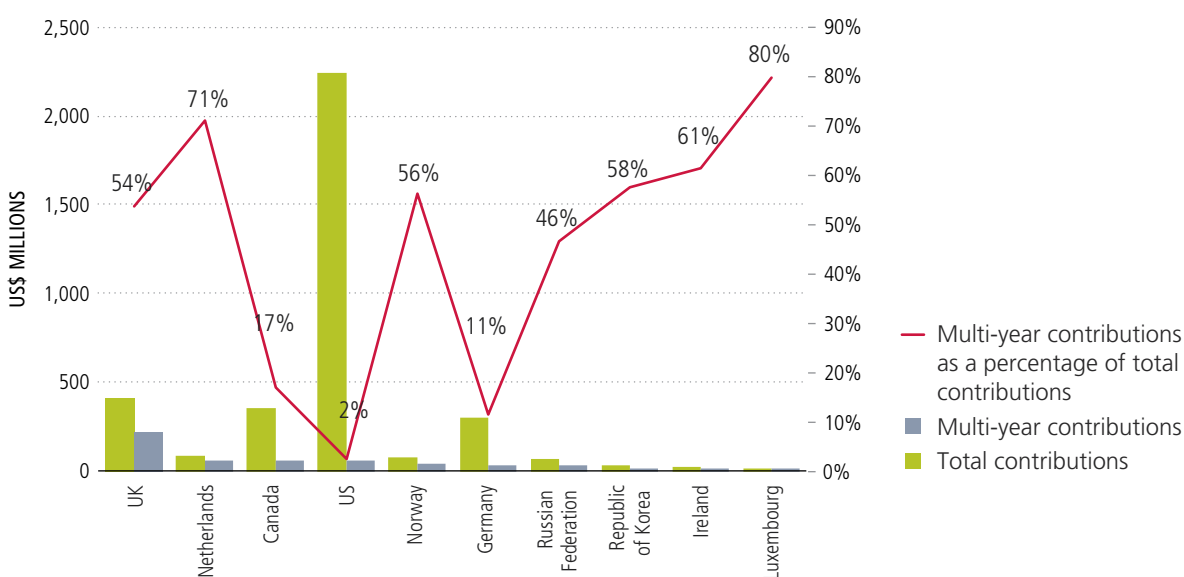
grants difficult. Current financial tracking platforms and standards do not allow funding provided as part of multi-annual commitments to be identified as such, making it currently impossible to accurately determine the real scale of multi-annual funding at the global level.

While the potential gains of multi-year approaches and funding are well established in theory, early indications suggest that returns on multi-annual investments have been uneven. Most notably, primary recipients of multi-year

funding (typically UN agencies and international NGOs – see Chapter 4) do not appear to routinely pass on multi-year and flexible funding to their implementing partners, limiting gains further down the transaction chain.²⁷ Aligning multi-year humanitarian planning timeframes and objectives with development-oriented planning frameworks has also been problematic in practice, hampering the potential synergies of multi-year humanitarian approaches with longer-term development outcomes.²⁸

FIGURE 5.9

10 contributors of the most multi-year funding to World Food Programme in 2014



Source: World Food Programme 2015