

# Humanitarian Report 2017-2022



## Front page picture

South Sudanese refugee woman with child planting a tree in in West Nile Region, Uganda. One of the objectives of the ADRA 2017 Major humanitarian intervention was *approved access to farming skills, food security and environmental protection*.

Photo: ADRA Uganda

## List of abbreviations

**ADRA - Adventist Development Relief Agency Sweden**

**CCS - Christian Council of Sweden**

**CHS - Core Humanitarian Standard**

**CEPBU - Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte au Burundi**

**CSO - Civil Society Organisation**

**EMWACDO / EMWACDC - Ethiopian Mulu Wongel Amagnoch Church Development Commission**

**FBO - Faith Based Organisation**

**IAS - International Aid Services**

**IHL- International Humanitarian Law**

**LM - Läkarmissionen**

**MEAL - Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning**

**PMU - Pingstmissionens utvecklingsamarbete**

**PMU Partner - A Yemeni NGO with masked name due to security reasons. The name is however known to PMU, SMC and Sida and SMC and Sida have met with partner while visiting Sweden, and in Jordan, several times during the reporting period.**

**SMC - Swedish Mission Council**

**SNHA - Swedish Network for Humanitarian Actors**

**UN - United Nations**

**TASCO - Taakulo Somaliland Community**

**WCC - World Council of Churches**

# Contents

1. Introduction .....	5
2. Progress in SMC’s organisational development.....	6
2.1 Organisational changes .....	6
2.2 Revised or new policies, routines, and systems.....	6
2.4 Implementing CHS in all humanitarian work .....	7
2.5 Humanitarian networks and forums .....	8
2.6 The Sida - SMC dialogue .....	9
2.7 External evaluations and their effects .....	9
3. Contribution to Sida’s Humanitarian Strategy objectives .....	10
3.1 Needs-based, fast and effective humanitarian response .....	10
3.2 Increased protection for people affected by crises and increased respect for humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law .....	11
3.3 Increased influence for people affected by crises.....	12
3.4 Greater capacity and efficiency in the humanitarian system.....	12
4. Results analysis .....	13
4.1 SMC assessments and quality assurance.....	13
4.2 Results analysis per sector (aggregated outcomes) .....	14
4.3 Rapid Response Mechanism .....	17
4.4 Geographic coverage.....	18
4.5 Monitoring evaluation and learning.....	19
5. Mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues .....	20
5.1 Gender and inclusion .....	20
5.2 Conflict sensitivity .....	21
5.3 Resilience.....	22
5.4 Environment and Climate Change.....	23
5.5 HDP Nexus .....	24
5.6 Localisation .....	24
6. Capacity Development.....	26
6.1 Challenges and lessons learnt .....	28
6.2 Results .....	29
7. Financial management.....	31
7.1 Challenges and lessons learnt .....	31
8. Key reflections.....	33
9. Ways forward.....	35

# 1. Introduction

During the reporting period of 2017-2022, SMC- Faith in Development provided humanitarian assistance to 2.2 million people in dire need across 17 countries. At the beginning of the agreement period in 2017, SMC had received three years of humanitarian funding and was still in the start-up phase of coordinating humanitarian affairs within our network of member organisations.

Throughout this reporting period, SMC's humanitarian team has consisted of six member organisations: Adventist Development Relief Agency Sweden (ADRA), Christian Council of Sweden (CCS), International Aid Services (IAS), ERIKS Development Partner (ERIKS), Läkarmissionen (LM), and PMU. Together, they represent the Humanitarian network of 24 partners who implemented 64 projects in 17 countries funded by Sida HUM through SMC.

This report analyses the results and lessons learned through the humanitarian assistance provided by SMC from April 1, 2017, to October 31, 2022. It also provides an analysis of the challenges, development, and improvement that have taken place during the six years of implementation spanning two different Sida Humanitarian strategic periods. Additionally, the report includes shared experiences from capacity-building initiatives initiated by SMC and the Humanitarian network, all of which contributed to achieving Sida's Humanitarian Strategy objectives (see Chapter 3).

SMC's core value of localisation has been evident from the start. One of our strengths is our broad network of members and partners, and their long-term commitment and important presence in local communities. Many partner organisations guarantee fast and effective access through long-lasting relationships with local authorities, community groups, and religious leaders.

At the end of the reporting period, the number of people globally in need of humanitarian assistance reached 274 million, the highest number in decades. The ongoing humanitarian crises, primarily fueled by conflict, war, and the effects of climate change, were further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021. This overlapped with other pre-existing and emerging crises, emphasizing the importance of global cooperation for a sustainable future.

## 2. Progress in SMC's organisational development

### 2.1 Organisational changes

At the beginning of the reporting period, the SMC humanitarian team consisted of five members: ADRA, ERIKS, IAS, PMU, and the Christian Council of Sweden (CCS). On January 1st, 2019, IAS officially merged with another SMC member organisation, Läkarmissionen (LM), and LM replaced IAS in the SMC humanitarian team. However, after the end of the programmatic period 2017-2019, CCS left the humanitarian team when their program in Palestine and Israel was guided to apply for Sida funding through the country strategy for Palestine.

At the end of the reporting period, the humanitarian team consisted of four member organisations: ADRA, ERIKS, LM, and PMU, of which only two carried out the final humanitarian projects in South Sudan, Syria and Yemen funded by the limited Sida-SMC funding granted during the phase-out period of 2021-2022.

SMC's Member organisations represent humanitarian cooperation with Sida-SMC Major funding to 24 humanitarian partners in 17 countries during 2017-2022, with the majority of these organisations being faith-based and/or connected to local churches. To effectively work with local partners and their target groups in countries where religion plays a major role in society and people's lives, it is essential to have specific knowledge of the local context and the ability to bridge the worlds of faith, development, and humanitarian work, with a focus on sustainability and human rights. SMC refers to this as *religious literacy*. During the period of 2017-2022, SMC's work on religious literacy and freedom of religion or belief has further developed, and our expertise is sought by different global and national actors in Sweden and abroad.

SMC underwent a change of the organisational structure in March 2022, following an external review of the organisation. The review led to the decision to create a new unit which brings together all staff members responsible for managing Sida grants.

### 2.2 Revised or new policies, routines, and systems

Examples of new or revised SMC policies, routines and systems relating to the Humanitarian work 2017-2022:

- 2016 New humanitarian strategy for 2017-2021.
- 2016 Revised Climate and Environmental policy
- 2017 SMC member in CHS
- 2017 New Risk policy.
- 2017 New Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM)
- 2017 New Guidelines for development cooperation which highlight the importance of connecting development and humanitarian action to support community resilience and disaster risk reduction.
- 2017 SMC initiated a budget specifically for resilience for improving linkage between humanitarian assistance, early recovery, resilience, and development cooperation.
- 2018 New Learning and evaluation policy
- 2018 New Investment policy of equity capital

- 2018 New online course of safe traveling
- 2019 New Policy on financial reserves
- 2019 New Policy on religious literacy
- 2019 New policy on conflict sensitivity
- 2020 SMC became a member of Fabo Learning Platform (fabo.org).
- 2020 New CHS Action Plan for further CHS implementation, based on the self-assessment finalized in 2019.
- 2021 New policy on SMC's view on development and theory of change.
- 2021 The SMC strategy *Tillsammans för förändring 2017-2021* was replaced by the new strategy *Faith in a Better World, 2022 –2026*.
- 2022 Updated Procurement policy, based on the updated policy from Sida.
- 2022 SMC conducted an environmental assessment of the organisation and is currently working on developing and implementing the action plan in relation to that assessment.

## 2.4 Implementing CHS in all humanitarian work

SMC's humanitarian strategy for 2017-2022 puts Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) at the heart of the strategy and has been guiding SMC's humanitarian team in the promotion of quality and accountability. CHS has been the basis for humanitarian capacity development and has promoted "downward" accountability.

Among SMC's humanitarian team member, PMU and LM (IAS) are founding members of CHS Alliance, succeeding Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) in mid-2014. In June 2017 SMC made its formal application for CHS Alliance membership and in October SMC was accepted as a full CHS Alliance member. ADRA Sweden became an indirect CHS Alliance member in 2018 when ADRA International joined the Alliance. ERIKS is currently applying for CHS Alliance membership.

SMC, as well as the four humanitarian member organisations, is adopting CHS also in the development cooperation as the organisations are multi-mandated and that it would not be relevant to adopt the CHS only in humanitarian aid. Thus, the implementation of the CHS has strengthened the entire work of the member organisation as well as the partner organisations.

During 2018-2019 SMC made its first self-verification against CHS with a generally good result and during 2022 SMC made its second verification, currently waiting for the feedback report from CHS Alliance. The validation report from 2019 indicated that SMC on average scored above the other verified CHS Alliance members. The report shows strengths and weaknesses and becomes an important basis for SMC's work to develop the organisation in line with the action plan which was developed as a result of the self-assessment. One example of areas of improvement is to clarify in guidelines and in agreements which project information is to be shared with local authorities and target groups.

In November 2019, SMC led a delegation with its humanitarian team members to participate at the CHS Alliance Exchange and General Assembly in Bangkok. The participation gave SMC and the humanitarian team an excellent opportunity to be updated regarding the current discussions within the CHS Alliance and the developments of the organisation, to influence the Alliance and to get input in the further CHS implementation in SMC and its humanitarian team. Prior to the CHS Alliance Exchange and General Assembly, SMC took the initiative to a

preparation process also with Diakonia and ACT Church of Sweden to identify common positions, which were presented prior to the Exchange. The organisations jointly advocated for the promotion of localisation as a part of CHS.

SMC finds that the standard has provided a common language and framework for all member as well as partner organisations to improve the quality and effectiveness of assistance to people in need. It has facilitated greater accountability to people affected by crisis, laid out clear expectations and practical ways to ensure affected people are aware of their rights, and that their voices have not only been heard, but influenced decision-making, learning and course correction.

Looking at management processes and working practices through the CHS differs from using traditional management approaches. CHS helps to refocus work “downward”, because each CHS commitment takes a community – not a project – perspective.

SMC has conducted a number of humanitarian capacity building initiatives such as four regional week-long workshops in Africa and Asia, three 3-days online trainings, a CHS Trainer of Trainer course and CHS Refresher webinars.

SMC has also promoted CHS trainer of trainers - SMC, PMU and Erik’s participated in a ToT in Copenhagen in order to support further capacity building of local implementing partners. The result was that a long-term and network wide training capacity was established.

The capacity building programs have also included a flexible capacity development fund, designed to support members and partners in their own capacity development initiatives. One example is EMWACDC (PMU partner in Ethiopia, previously named EMWACDO) internal CHS training - drawing on the experience of SMC’s regional humanitarian workshop in Nairobi in 2016, which focused on the CHS. Through this flexible fund EMWACDC conducted an internal training on CHS and integrated CHS organisation-wide, and in their cooperation with local authorities.

*“Knowing the CHS helped to do things differently. In particular: 1) better coordination; 2) better participation (involving also women, children); 3) having complaint mechanisms.” – Dofa Kana, EMWACDC/PMU WASH coordinator, Moyale, Ehtiopia.<sup>1</sup>*

## 2.5 Humanitarian networks and forums

SMC is a member of networks such as SNHA (Swedish Network for Humanitarian Actors), the Resilience Network, and the CHS Alliance. The SMC humanitarian team with four member organisations in their turn are all part of various networks such as NGO VOICE and the faith-based network EU-CORD which promotes information sharing and cooperation between humanitarian actors.

In countries where the SMC network responds to humanitarian crises, the local implementing partners have long established relations with other CSOs, local authorities and government bodies and are active members of relevant clusters at local and national level. Partner

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<sup>1</sup> See video at: <https://youtu.be/AA8fNpS2vso>



organisations coordinate their humanitarian responses in a participatory way with the target groups/ beneficiaries, local communities, and authorities, with churches and FBOs, CSOs, the UN clusters, and other humanitarian actors if they are present.

## 2.6 The Sida - SMC dialogue

SMC has been a humanitarian strategic partner organisation to Sida since 2014.

SMC and Sida have met several times each year during the reporting period. On the agenda have among other things been challenges and advantages of the SMC umbrella structure, the multi-year interventions (reporting requirements), follow-up of SMC's final reports to Sida, the merger of LM and IAS, the Internal Control System Review of SMC, requirements for NCE, suspected cases of irregularities, introduction of new focal persons at SMC and at Sida, and also visits from partner organisations to Sweden. SMC and Sida have also had an ongoing dialogue on humanitarian needs and areas where SMC have the network to respond to acute humanitarian needs.

Annual Meetings have taken place each year.

In July 2020, Sida informed SMC that the humanitarian strategic partnership agreement would not be renewed. However, SMC was granted a period for phasing out activities from 2021-2022, adding to the ongoing agreement starting in 2017.

During the first quarter of 2022, SMC and Sida Hum decided in dialogue to prolong the current agreement and allow humanitarian activities until October 2022. It was also agreed that SMC would submit this narrative report for the entire six-year period of 2017-2022 on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2023. In early 2023, Sida confirmed to SMC that we can apply for capacity building funding onwards, something that had been discussed already in 2020. A Concept Note is currently drafted together with our humanitarian partners for further dialogue with Sida Hum. A full application will be ready in Q 3 2023.

## 2.7 External evaluations and their effects

In the first quarter of 2021, SMC evaluated the *SMC Humanitarian Strategy 2017-2021*. The purpose was to enable SMC to improve the relevance and effectiveness of future humanitarian strategies and programs of SMC and develop the SMC organisational capacities related to humanitarian work. The evaluation focused on humanitarian strategies and trends, internationally and in Sweden, on local programs and views from our partner organisations. The consultant Silva Ferretti assessed the relevance of the SMC Humanitarian Strategy 2017 – 2021 in the context of the current/changing humanitarian landscape, and the organisational strengths, limitations, and challenges of SMC concerning current trends in the humanitarian context. Ferretti also provided the SMC Board and management with advice and practical recommendations to consider in deciding on the future direction and organisation. The evaluation focused on humanitarian strategies and trends, internationally and in Sweden, on local programs and views from our partner organisations. The final report was presented in June 2021.

Due to the phase-out period of the Sida humanitarian funding 2022, SMC prolonged the 2017-2021 strategy to include year 2022, but the findings and recommendations in the evaluation keeps feeding into the humanitarian work onwards.

Conclusions from the *Evaluation of SMC's resilience work 2017-2021*, funded by the CIVSAM program, conducted in autumn 2020, also was highly relevant to our humanitarian work as our humanitarian team members have been most active within the resilience initiative. The evaluator stated that SMC, with its focus on rights, and with its increasing focus on issues of environment and climate justice, was in a strong place to embrace the transformative values of resilience in the face of the threats to come, together with many like-minded actors (including its partners and with the allies and networks).

### 3. Contribution to Sida's Humanitarian Strategy objectives

How SMC has contributed to the prioritised areas in the Strategy for Sweden's humanitarian aid 2017-2020 and the Strategy for 2021-2025 is explored below.



*In Yemen, 1,249 solar cookers were distributed as a part of PMU Major project 21703. Photo: PMU Partner, Yemen*

#### 3.1 Needs-based, fast, and effective humanitarian response

During the reporting period, SMC worked strategically to strengthen the humanitarian commitment and capacity of its member and partner organisations in local contexts.

One of SMC's strategic directions for 2017-2021 was to “expand the ability of SMC's member and partner organisations to operate as first responders”, enabling them to become even more relevant and effective in their humanitarian interventions. The ability to respond faster through the RRM system with competent and needs based humanitarian response was achieved through capacity building initiatives. The number of RRM projects were 8 in 2017, 6 in 2018, 9 in 2019 and 7 in 2020.

To ensure and improve the needs-based responses, SMC's capacity-building efforts focused particularly on enhancing member and partner organisations' capacity for conducting needs assessments. In 2018, SMC launched a needs assessment fund specifically designed to enable smaller grassroots organisations to carry out large-scale, intersectoral, and globally comparable needs assessments. During 2019, SMC's collaboration and capacity-building efforts within its network resulted in several local partners developing stronger capacities and competencies to respond to humanitarian needs in hard-to-reach areas and to identify vulnerable groups.

Throughout the reporting period, interventions consciously included methods to promote resilience to a greater extent. SMC and its network of members and partners remained committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.

### 3.2 Increased protection for people affected by crises and increased respect for humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law

SMC humanitarian interventions contribute to increased protection for people affected by crises and increased respect for humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law.



*In the Ecumenical Accompaniment programme (EAPPI), nearly 8,000 Palestinian students per day were provided protection, being accompanied to their schools by international volunteers. The picture shows Palestinian schoolchildren in Hebron passing an Israeli Checkpoint where EAPPI volunteers are present. Photo: EAPPI.*

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (Multi-year project 2017-2020) focused entirely on the sector Protection, striving to strengthen the respect for International Humanitarian Law in Palestine and Israel. SMC visited the program in 2018 and

observed how the volunteers of the programme reported violations on IHL to the UN, contributing to the Protection cluster. Through the international program, where only the Swedish contribution was funded by Sida through SMC, nearly 8,000 Palestinian students per day were provided protective presence, being accompanied to their schools through the programme. Limited access, for example caused by rules set up by authorities, and/or ongoing armed conflicts are great challenges for humanitarian aid. Many partner organisations guarantee access through long lasting relationships with local authorities, community groups and religious leaders.

Protection has been one of the focus sectors in Major projects in Burundi, Syria, Uganda and Yemen and in several RRM projects, the projects reaching a total approximate number of 650,747 persons with protection during the reporting period.

### 3.3 Increased influence for people affected by crises

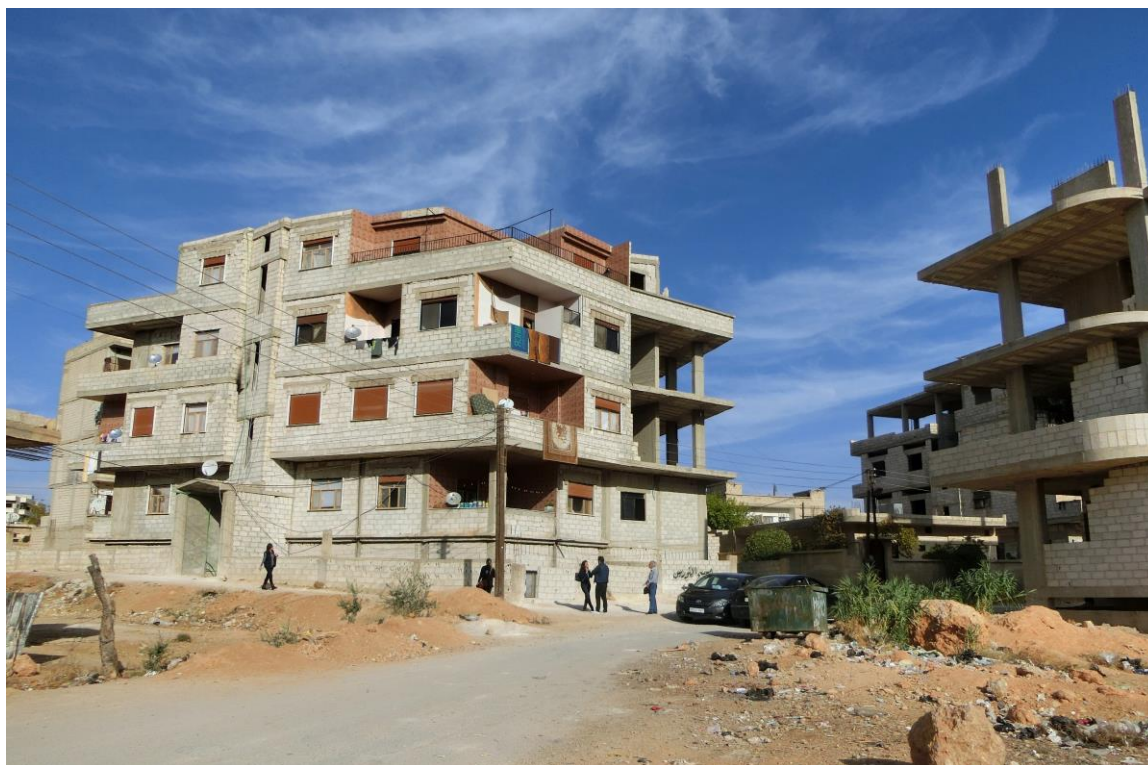
The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) has been at the heart of SMC's humanitarian strategy for 2017-2021 (prolonged for the phase-out period 2022) and CHS forms the basis for all capacity development and quality assurance. The basic idea with CHS is to promote “downward” accountability which includes increased influence for people affected by crises. Each commitment takes a *community* – not a *project* – perspective.

SMC has promoted capacity building in relation to CHS during the reporting period. SMC and its member organisations have promoted increased capacity of partner organisations to integrate the needs, conditions, rights and priorities of people affected by crises into the planning, implementation and follow-up of interventions.

SMC has also seen results of the trainings, including improved conditions for people affected by crises, visible in external evaluations and feedback from participants in trainings.

### 3.4 Greater capacity and efficiency in the humanitarian system

Coordination is key to effective and efficient humanitarian response. SMC and its humanitarian team members and their partner organisations are multi-mandated organisations involved in humanitarian work as well as development cooperation and therefore skilled at networking and coordination. The SMC network has during the reporting period coordinated its humanitarian responses with communities, churches and FBOs, other CSOs, government agencies, the UN and other humanitarian actors. Coordination and collaboration have to work at all stages of the humanitarian response and at all levels of the aid chain to support fast and relevant response to the needs of people affected by crisis. The emphasis on coordination and complementarity implicitly recognises the importance of a multitude of actors with different added values at different levels of the humanitarian system. The SMC network added during the reporting period value to the global system through its faith-based grass root identity linking first responders and local communities with government coordination bodies, the UN cluster system and donors.



*In rural Damascus, Syria, 200 apartments were rehabilitated for internal refugees, as a part of ADRA, 18709 Major project. Photo: Sofie Twal Hedman, SMC*

## 4. Results analysis

### 4.1 SMC assessments and quality assurance

Being an umbrella organisation, SMC has three specific roles and responsibilities in order to safeguard efficient, timely, result-oriented, and qualitative humanitarian assistance by its member and partner organisations: 1) funding, accountability and quality assurance; 2) capacity development; and 3) offering a platform for communication, information sharing and learning.

SMC has during the reporting period assessed the member organisations through organisational assessments, and the member organisations have assessed their local partners and their capacity to act timely and implement humanitarian relief.

A new organisational assessment was launched in September 2019. The system was well received by the Internal Control System Review of SMC. A regularly updated manual for quality assurance has resulted in a Routine Handbook guiding the administration of the humanitarian allocation from Sida.

Monitoring has been done through field visits, assessments of applications, progress reports, final reports, and evaluations, not to mention through meetings with the humanitarian team and the ongoing dialogue with implementing partners.

The possibility to make field trips was severely affected by the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic. During the period, SMC and its network earned a lot of experience in conducting digital meetings, digital field and monitoring visits.

## 4.2 Results analysis per sector (aggregated outcomes)

The assistance provided by SMC's member and partner organisations have saved lives, alleviated suffering and safeguarded dignity for an approximate number of 2,2 million women, men, girls and boys within the sectors Education, Food and Nutrition, Health, Livelihood, Non-food-items and Shelters, Protection and WASH during 2017-2022.

In 2017, seven Major interventions were implemented in Ethiopia, Niger, Palestine (multi-year), Sudan (multi-year), Uganda and Yemen in the sectors Food, WASH and Protection. 11 RRM's were implemented in Bangladesh, Burundi, Somalia, and Yemen. An approximate number of 370,000 persons were reached by assistance, taking overlaps into account. However, the three-year Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (CCS,17701) did not report on the large number of people affected by the intervention by the protective presence at checkpoints and terminals, as the detailed data was not collected, and gender disaggregated for the first year. Reaching 236,000 persons year two and 265,500 persons year three: an assumption is, however that the number of persons reached in 2017 is approximately in the same range. Based on uncertainties, this number is not included in the report, however.

**Table 1. Number of people who have received humanitarian assistance per sector 2017.**

	Number of girls	Number of boys	Number of women	Number of men	Total number of people reached
Food and nutrition	77,823	72,556	74,350	67,839	323,899
WASH	27,287	27,629	27,133	22,839	104,888
Protection	9,510	10,243	11,624	10,592	41,969
<b>TOTAL excluding overlaps</b>	<b>114,620</b>	<b>110,428</b>	<b>113,107</b>	<b>101,270</b>	<b>370,000*</b>

\*The total number of persons reached 2017 is an estimated 370,000, the sum of all the reported results in each final report, and the annual reports from the multi-year programs. Some data from CCS program in Palestine is lacking.

In 2018, six Major interventions were implemented and/or reported in Burundi, Ethiopia, Palestine (multi-year), Sudan (multi-year) South Sudan, Niger and Uganda. Additionally, three interventions based on extra or mid-year allocation from Sida was implemented and/or reported in Syria, South Sudan and Yemen. Six RRM's were implemented in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Mauretania (two), Uganda and Yemen.

During the year a total of approximately 596,000 people were reached through the 15 interventions funded by Sida. The estimated number of people affected by the three-year Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (CCS,17701) was 236,00 people, through services leading to safe access to worship, livelihood, and education. The number is however not included in the table below as the data was estimated and was not gender disaggregated.

Table 2. Number of people who have received humanitarian assistance per sector 2018.

	Number of girls	Number of boys	Number of women	Number of men	Total number of people reached
Food and nutrition	63 647	57 308	52 706	38 530	212 191
WASH	14 211	12 473	29 194	20 332	76 210
Protection	4 420	4 634	5 641	5 333	60 338*
Education	3 423	5 539			8 962
Health	919	803	2 113	14	3 849
Livelihood	-	-	1 903	2 589	35 492**
NFI /shelter	12 827	11 419	20 840	15 364	60 450
<b>TOTAL excluding overlaps</b>	<b>75 433</b>	<b>67 440</b>	<b>80 385</b>	<b>56 479</b>	<b>360,357*</b>

\* Including non-disaggregated 40 310

\*\*Including non-disaggregated 31 000

\*Including non-disaggregated 40 310

In 2019, seven Major interventions were implemented and/or reported in Ethiopia (reported), Mauretania, Niger, Palestine (multi-year), Sudan (multi-year), South Sudan (two projects merged) and Uganda. Nine RRM's were implemented in Bangladesh, Mozambique, Niger, South Sudan, Syria, Uganda, Yemen (two) and Zimbabwe, see sectors in table below. In 2019, a total of approximately 687,000 people were reached through the 16 interventions funded by Sida included in the report, including the estimated number of people affected by the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (CCS, 17701) of 265,500 people. The number is however not included in the table below as the data was estimated and was not gender disaggregated.

Table 3. Number of people who have received humanitarian assistance per sector 2019.

	Number of girls	Number of boys	Number of women	Number of men	Total number of people reached
Food and nutrition	35,011	32,969	27,659	22,574	118,551
WASH	67,653	69,456	80,927	70,360	288,395
Protection	10,488	10	7,780	10	10,488*
Health	5,530	5,770	14,000	9,240	34,540
Livelihood	1,190	1,320	1,250	1,230	4,990
NFI /shelter	3,237	2,873	2,755	2,215	11,026
<b>TOTAL excluding overlaps</b>	<b>109,446</b>	<b>108,468</b>	<b>111,603</b>	<b>91,878</b>	<b>421,435</b>

In 2020, six Major interventions were implemented in Burundi, Mauretania, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen (two). Seven RRM's were implemented in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso (two), Ethiopia, Malawi, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. In 2020, an approximate number of 320,000 persons were reached, taking overlaps into account.

Table 4. Number of people who have received humanitarian assistance per sector 2020.

	Number of girls	Number of boys	Number of women	Number of men	Total number of people reached
Food and nutrition	40 463	37 605	32 507	26 053	136 628
WASH	41 073	41 233	54 897	57 597	194 800
Protection	4 077	3 963	3 435	3 365	14 840
Health	18 246	17 434	15 478	15 407	66 565
Livelihood	11 832	10 934	9 336	8 958	41 060
NFI /shelter	15 982	27 235	12 966	10 264	66 447
<b>TOTAL excluding overlaps</b>	<b>77 998</b>	<b>70 986</b>	<b>81 752</b>	<b>74 847</b>	<b>318,572</b>

In 2021, four Major interventions were implemented in South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, by two member organisations and their four partner organisations. An approximate number of 145,000 persons were reached, taking overlaps into account.

**Table 5. Number of people who have received humanitarian assistance per sector 2021.**

	Number of girls	Number of boys	Number of women	Number of men	Total number of people reached
<b>Food and nutrition</b>	10,859	8,079	17,011	6,349	42,298
<b>WASH</b>	29,193	29,503	38,797	38,307	135,800
<b>Protection</b>	310	400	360	360	1,430
<b>Livelihood</b>	3,498	883	9,770	2,449	16,600
<b>NFI /shelter</b>	-	-	800	450	1,250
<b>TOTAL excluding overlaps</b>	31,808	29,683	45,530	37,809	144,830

In 2022, two Major interventions were implemented in South Sudan and Syria. In South Sudan, the same 16,682 individuals were reached with Food security and Livelihood support, and a smaller number of the 16,682 were also reached with Nutrition and WASH services. In Syria, 30,000 individuals benefitted from Wash services, and 20,000 others from Protection in form of streetlight-provision. 182 individuals who were reached by WASH-services, were also provided with Protection in form of assistive devices. The total number of persons reached 2022 was approximately 67 000.

**Table 6. Number of people who have received humanitarian assistance per sector 2022.**

	Number of girls	Number of boys	Number of women	Number of men	Total number of people reached
<b>Food and nutrition</b>	3,296	1,001	9,382	3,003	16,682
<b>WASH</b>	8,472	7,050	13,728	9,750	39,000
<b>Protection</b>	4,434	4,426	5,662	5,660	20,182
<b>Livelihood</b>	3,296	1,001	9,382	3,003	16,682
<b>TOTAL excluding overlaps</b>	14,296	12,001	23,382	17,003	66 682*

The total aggregated numbers per sector is reported per year as presented below.

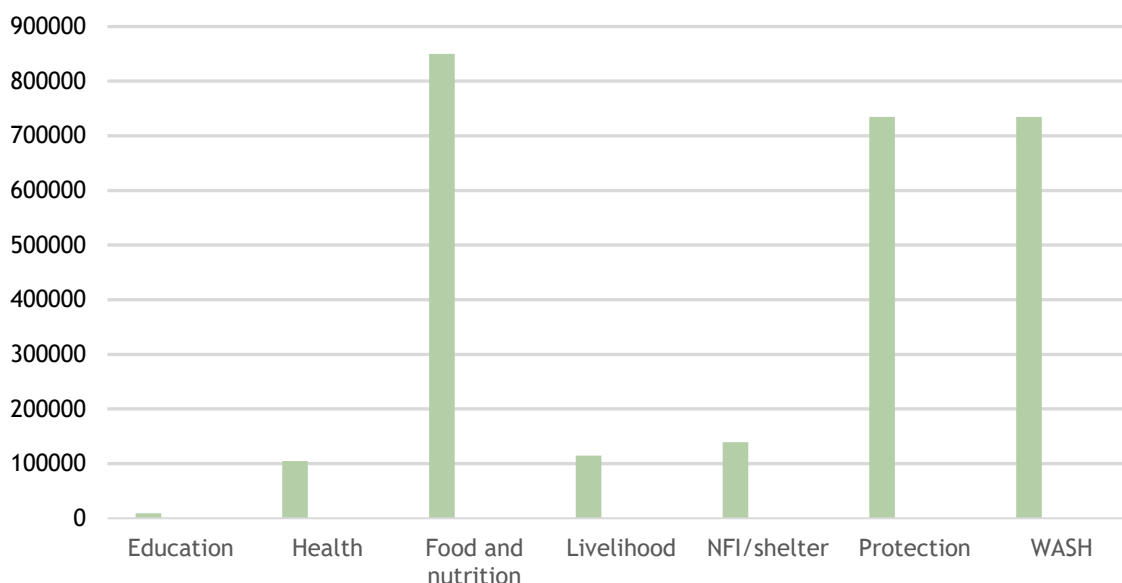
**Table 7. Total number of people who have received humanitarian assistance per sector 2017-2022.**

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total per sector
<b>Food and nutrition</b>	323,899	212,191	118,551	136,628	42,298	16,682	850,249
<b>WASH</b>	550	76,210	288,395	194,800	135,800	39,000	734,755
<b>Protection</b>	41,969	296,338	275,988	14,840	1,430	20,182	650,747
<b>Education</b>	-	8,962	-	-	-	-	8,962
<b>Health</b>	-	3,849	34,540	66,565	-	-	104,954
<b>Livelihood</b>	-	35,492	4,990	41,060	16,600	16,682	114,824
<b>NFI /shelter</b>	-	60,450	11,026	66,447	1,250	-	139,173
<b>GRAND TOTAL*</b>	366,418	596,357	686,935	318,572	144,830	66,682	2 179 794

GRAND TOTAL excluding overlaps. This table also contains the results of the CCS program in Palestine 2018 and 2019 that was excluded from the annual tables. The data from CCS program 2017 of an approximate 235 000 people reached by protection is however lacking since no background data is available. One can argue that the persons reached within the multi-year programs in Sudan and Palestine 2017-2019 could be reported several years, hence the grand total of 2,2 million is an estimation.

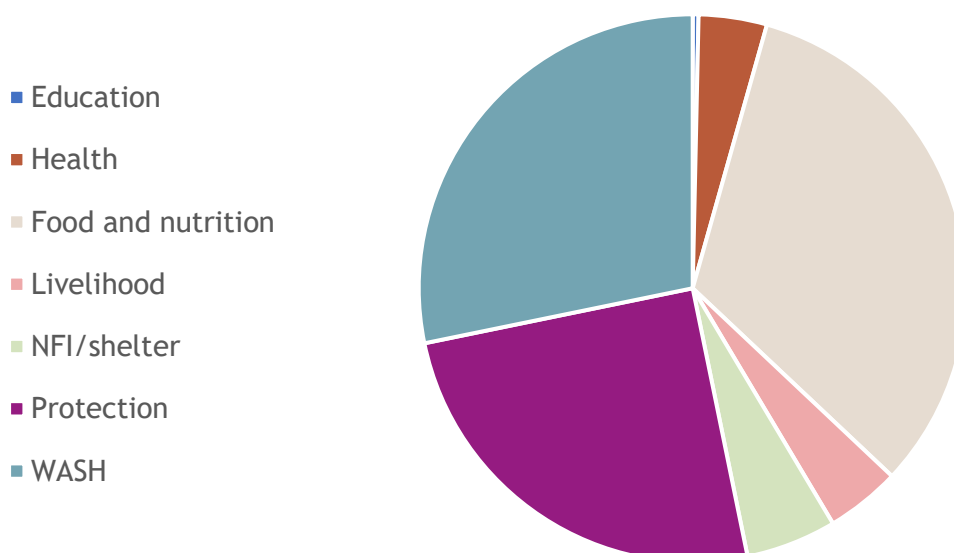


Number of persons reached by sector 2017-2022



As seen in the pie chart below, the main sectors for SMC with member organisations and their Humanitarian partners have been Food and nutrition, Protection and WASH.

Sectors 2017-2022  
(based on persons reached)



### 4.3 Rapid Response Mechanism

During the reporting period, SMC was part of the RRM system 2017 – 2020. 29 Rapid Response Mechanism projects were implemented in 15 countries, giving an average of more than 7 RRM projects per year.





Settings, Safety and Security; Complaint and Response Mechanism (CRM); and arranged for a Follow up-workshop on CHS Action plans made by member and partner organisations.



*In ERIKs Major project 17760, Rohingya refugees in Cox Bazar, Bangladesh, were assisted with safe shelter and WASH facilities. Photo: Lennart Nolvall, SMC*

## 5. Mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues

### 5.1 Gender and inclusion

Gender equality was one of three strategic focus areas for SMC during the strategic period 2017-2020, and a focus area also 2021-2022, meaning that SMC worked actively to integrate a gender perspective to all its development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. On a general level SMC has raised gender equality in different ways with our member and partner organisations.

Disaggregated data collection has been a prioritized dialogue issue with our members and their partner organisations and SMC can conclude that there has been a continued good and results-oriented reporting from partners. Already in 2017, SMC reported an increase in gender and age disaggregated data available in proposals and reports compared to previous years, and at the end of the reporting period, all projects were reported in a gender and age disaggregated manner.

In 2017, SMC continued working with implementing the revised policy for gender equality that was adopted in March the year before. The policy established SMC's intent for gender equality to be integrated into all stages of all activities, including every stage of an SMC supported

intervention. In late 2017, SMC developed a learning centre online with methodological tools, including a page for gender equality. SMC joined the HUM-SRHR network in late 2018.

In 2018, SMC identified that whilst the projects were focusing on women inclusion, there was a need to work beyond women representation, and to continuously scan for actors who are left out from existing decision-making bodies (women, children, youth and disabled persons). During 2019-2022, SMC noted changes in the approach, and in the later years of the period, all projects included reflections and approaches on how to include all groups.

In the beginning of 2019, SMC commissioned a baseline study on gender equality in its development cooperation. The objective was to get a clearer image of SMC's and the member organisations' capacity and needs in regard to working in a way informed by gender equality, as well as looking at capacity gaps among partners and SMC at an organisational level in regard to integrating gender perspectives at all levels. The study was finalised in June 2019 after which SMC worked actively to implement the action plan in response to the recommendations in the study.

SMC launched a combined e-learning and webinar series on Gender issues in humanitarian action in November 2020, inviting members and partner organisations to participate. In 2020, all Major interventions also include GAM results and GAM reference numbers, and these indicates a high level of gender integration overall.

During 2021 and 2022, SMC launched several trainings for members and their partner organisations in building capacity on Safeguarding in humanitarian responses, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, Core Humanitarian Standard, gender analysis, and trainer of trainers' course in CHS.

## 5.2 Conflict sensitivity

SMC's commitment to conflict sensitivity incorporates various aspects such as strengthening CHS for all partners, improving our quality of training, dialogue with members, and quality assurance of applications, as well as insecurity and risk mitigation. We can see that humanitarian assistance is often most needed in countries and regions suffering from armed conflict or high tensions, and that implementation occasionally is confronted with negative effects or must change due to conflict. Thus, SMC has raised the importance of strong conflict analyses in the dialogue of both RRM and Major applications, to ensure do-no-harm and to promote social cohesion and peacebuilding.

Already during the 2014 – 2016 strategic period, SMC increased its attention to conflict sensitivity and updated the requirements for both Major and RRM projects. One result of this was that a Conflict Impact Assessment (CIA) from 2017 onwards was conducted more systematically as part of new interventions. A CIA was to be done for each intervention, showing the sources of tensions between different groups and actors in society, local capacities for peace, how the intervention may negatively or positively affect the context and relationships between different groups, as well as how identified risks should be mitigated. SMC also noticed that partner organisations described that they were using various strategies to mitigate conflict, such as strengthening local structures, inclusion of host communities and local structures in decision making, sharing information, and including the host community in the assistance.

Project visits have been crucial opportunities for SMC's follow up on conflict sensitivity and how it is practiced. In June 2018, SMC visited ADRA Syria and one key recommendation was to improve the understanding of the complex conflict at all levels of the cooperation (SMC, ADRA Sweden and ADRA Syria). In Sudan (December 2018) SMC encouraged IAS Sudan to exchange experiences and ask for advice from experts on conflict sensitivity and peace building. The dialogues that started before the COVID-19 Pandemic had to take place digitally during the travel restrictions, posing a challenge to discuss more sensitive matters.

In December 2019, the SMC board adopted a new policy for conflict sensitivity. The process leading to a new policy was characterised by engagement and participation from member organisations and wide consultation in our network. An active working group included members from the SMC humanitarian team (PMU and ERIKS), members with specific conflict expertise (Life & Peace Institute and Swefor) and other members with capacity and experience from working in areas with social tension or conflict. This participatory process clearly demonstrates the added value of SMC as a platform and member-based organisation.

### 5.3 Resilience

Until 2016, the humanitarian agreement with Sida allowed support to operations focusing on Disaster Risk Reduction. This was found very relevant as it promoted the linkage between humanitarian aid and development, especially as all of SMC's humanitarian member organisations since the first humanitarian agreement with Sida in 2014, i.e., ADRA Sweden, ERIKS, LM and PMU, and their local partner organisations, are multi-mandated organisations. There has historically been a very close link between humanitarian aid and development as humanitarian operations often has been implemented in contexts with ongoing development cooperation.

To continue and increase the support for Disaster Risk Reduction and the promotion of Resilience, as well as and Hum-Dev-Peace Nexus, became an important part of SMC's humanitarian strategy for 2017-2021. This was a part of SMC's overall strategy for 2017-2021 which included a special Resilience effort for promotion and adoption of the Sendai Framework for DRR. The effort had complementing parts, including 1) a special budget of approximately SEK 5 million per year for resilience/DRR-focused operations, 2) increased networking nationally through the Swedish Resilience Network and globally thorough Global Network for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) for exchange and advocacy, and 3) capacity building through national and regional resilience workshop, mainly focusing on the Africa Region.

SMC sees good results of the Resilience effort. The best example might be ADRA Sweden and its partner organisation which has included a strategic resilience approach in its development program for 2022-2026, based on the Dynamic Resilience Wheel, a resilience framework developed by Lutheran World Services, as well as a resilience approach in its humanitarian operation financed by Sida. The humanitarian operations included provision of sustainable water solutions in Syria and Yemen during the final years of the period and earlier a promotion of formal and informal education in humanitarian settings in Uganda, reaching a large number of vulnerable people.

An example of an optimal link between development cooperation and humanitarian aid is found in Mauretania where PMU during the entire period 2017-2022 has been supporting community development operations in terms of food security, funded by Sida Civsam, which

has made the communities more resilient to reoccurring droughts. In extreme drought situations, the national partner organisation has advocated for humanitarian support in situations where the government did not recognise the severity and implemented well balanced and resilience-focused food security interventions, funded by Sida Hum. Food for work has, for example, been used.

Almost all Major humanitarian operations during 2017-2022 has consciously included some sort of methods for DRR and Resilience. One-year Major humanitarian project reports shows naturally stronger examples of DRR and Resilience, compared to shorter term RRM operations. For Major interventions the focus on DRR has varied from awareness and advocacy training of local committees (Bangladesh) to construction of water dams (Ethiopia).

Resilience is mainstreamed in the individual humanitarian operations to ensure that humanitarian aid strengthens the resilience, recovery, and adaptation capacity of populations affected by natural disasters or conflicts and war.

SMC was one of the five organisations which formed the Swedish Resilience Network in 2015. Since then, SMC has played an active role in the development of the network. At the end of 2022, the network had 24 member organisation of which 11 are SMC member organisations. The network is closely linked to the Global Network for Disaster Reduction. SMC has acted as the National Focal Point for GNDR since 2020 and has strongly promoted GNDR membership, networking and advocacy among member as well as partner organisations. Today 9 of the member organisations are members of GNDR.

SMC has led a delegation to the UNDRR Global Platform for DRR 2018 in Geneva as well as in 2022 in Indonesia, which has included delegates from member as well as partner organisations, advocating for localisation of the Sendai Framework for DRR.

An external evaluation of the Resilience effort during the spring 2020 showed that the combination of dedicated funding for resilience focused operations, networking, advocacy and capacity building was successful and has resulted in resilience thinking among SMC's partner organisations.

The SMC humanitarian member organisations ADRA Sweden, ERIKS, LM and PMU have been in the forefront to promote resilience and DRR.

## 5.4 Environment and Climate Change

In 2017, SMC released a new policy for Environment, Climate, DRR and Resilience which has guided development cooperation as well as humanitarian operations supported by SMC during 2017-2022. Environment and Climate has been mainstreamed in all operations. Some humanitarian operations have included efforts to reduce the need for electricity and fuel such as introduction of solar panels at water systems (for example in Syria, Uganda and Yemen), street-lights (Syria) and solar cookers (Yemen).

With the SMC strategy for 2022-2026, Environment and Climate Change is addressed within the thematic focus on Environment, Climate and Resilience, which is built on SMC's Resilience effort during the former strategic period 2017-2021, but with a broader focus.

Lately, SMC has reflected on the relevance of adopting the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisation but has not signed it, partly as SMC is not acting as an operative organisation and partly as the humanitarian agreement with Sida Hum was not renewed.

SMC notices that it's the humanitarian member organisations of SMC, i.e., ADRA Sweden, ERIKS, LM and PMU which have been in the forefront to promote resilience and addressing environmental degradation and climate change in cooperation with their partner organisations since 2017.

## 5.5 HDP Nexus

The promotion of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus has been a part of SMC's humanitarian strategy for 2017-2021 and the Resilience effort. Programmatically, the HDP Nexus has been promoted by SMC both from the humanitarian side and the development side, and the SMC policies have been developed to optimise the possibilities for nexus programming. Further, with support from Sida Civsam through SMC, the Life and Peace institute has developed a specific tool, the Resilience to Conflict Assessment Tool (RCAT), which promote resilience on community and individual level in relation to conflicts. The tool has been shared within the SMC network of members and partners, especially in Kenya where it mainly has been developed and contributed to nexus understanding and programming.

The Resilience network has had meetings with Sida's former Resilience Committee which has continued with the current Nexus committee, for joint learning and policy dialogue. In 2019, SMC together with ERIKS, ADRA Sweden and ADRA Bangladesh participated in Sida Partnership Forum's workshop "Working in the Triple Nexus" in Härnösand. In 2021, SMC developed an internal Triple Nexus concept paper with the aim to enhance this integrated approach within the humanitarian and development work, and into the forthcoming strategy for 2022-2026.

The SMC humanitarian team members have during the last year also increasingly applied a HDP nexus approach, facilitated by participation in the Nexus workshops arranged by Sida in 2019.

## 5.6 Localisation

The commitment to CHS is one of the fundamentals in the SMC's mission which contributes to a sustainable and long-lasting change. In all countries where SMC supports humanitarian operations, interventions have been designed and implemented by professional local or semi-local organisations well-established in the local context. Semi-local national offices are organisations with rather high level of independence and with mainly national staff local staff but with international registrations. The ability to work with local partners has allowed programming to happen faster, especially in hard-to-reach areas.

At an average SMC member organisation projects transferred 94,3% of their received funds to national and local implementing organisations or semi-local offices.

During the reporting period, a total of 35 Major humanitarian interventions and 29 Rapid Response Mechanism projects were implemented, making it a total number of 64 projects.



The Major projects were implemented by:

- ACROSS in South Sudan, (6 projects) partner to PMU
- ADRA Syria (4) partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Uganda (2 projects) partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Yemen (1 projects) partner to ADRA Sweden
- CEPBU in Burundi (2 projects) partner to PMU
- EAPPI/WCC (1 project) partner to CCS
- EMWACDO in Ethiopia (2 projects) partner to PMU
- Espoir in Mauretania (2 projects) partner to PMU
- IAS Uganda (3 projects), partner to LM
- IAS Ethiopia (2 projects), partner to LM
- IAS Niger (4 projects), partner to LM
- IAS Sudan (1 projects), partner to LM
- IAS South Sudan (1 projects), partner to LM
- PMU Partner, Yemen (4 projects) partner to PMU

The RRM projects were implemented by:

- ACROSS in South Sudan (1 project) partner to PMU
- ADRA Bangladesh (3 projects), partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Burkina Faso (1 project), partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Malawi (1 project), partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Mozambique (1 project), partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Syria (1 project), partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Uganda (1 project), partner to ADRA Sweden
- ADRA Yemen (2 projects), partner to ADRA Sweden
- AOGZ in Zimbabwe (2 projects) partner to PMU
- CeFord in South Sudan (1 project) partner to ERIKS
- CEPBU in Burundi (1 project) partner to PMU
- EFICOR in India (1 project) partner to ERIKS
- EMWACDO in Ethiopia (2 projects), partner to PMU
- Espoir in Mauritania (1 project) partner to PMU
- Friendship in Bangladesh (4 projects) partner to ERIKS
- IAS Niger (1 project) partner to LM
- IAS Somalia (1 project) partner to LM (project implemented with TASCO)
- IAS Uganda (1 project) partner to LM
- PMU Partner Yemen (2 projects) partner to PMU
- TASCO in Somalia (1 project) partner to LM (project implemented with IAS Somalia)

18 of the 35 Major interventions (50%) and 22 of the 29 Rapid Response Mechanisms (76%) were implemented by locally registered partners. In total, 15 locally registered partners have implemented 40 projects (in total, 63% of the 64 projects) during the period: ACROSS in South Sudan, ADRA Bangladesh, ADRA Burkina Faso, ADRA Malawi, ADRA Mozambique, ADRA Uganda, AOGZ in Zimbabwe, CeFord in South Sudan, CEPBU in Burundi, EMWACDO

in Ethiopia, Esplor in Mauretania, EFICOR in India, PMU Partner in Yemen, Friendship in Bangladesh and TASCOS in Somalia (project implemented with IAS Somalia).

The other 17 Major projects and 6 Rapid Response mechanism (in total 38% of the 64 projects) were implemented by 9 semi-local national offices: ADRA's internationally registered country offices in Syria and Yemen; IAS country offices IAS Ethiopia, IAS Niger, IAS Sudan, IAS South Sudan, IAS Somalia and IAS Uganda; and the EAPPI/WCC local office in Jerusalem, all with strong local connection and partly or only local staff.

Even though some operations were implemented by semi-local national offices, the operations were implemented in close cooperation and collaboration with local actors including local civil society organisations.

All members of SMC's humanitarian team have a strong commitment to localisation and to channel humanitarian funding through local partners in line with the devise that humanitarian action should be "as local as possible, as international as necessary" (the UN Secretary-General's call at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016).

## 6. Capacity Development

In times of crisis, it is imperative to SMC that humanitarian staff within our network possess the necessary tools and comply with established standards. In the context of SMC's operations, capacity building and collective learning are of utmost importance. During the period 2017-2022, SMC has undertaken tailored capacity building initiatives applied to the local humanitarian context, with the goal to build the knowledge and skills of our member and partner organisations, to design and implement effective interventions in response to disasters.

SMC's pedagogical approach outlines the guiding principles for our learning initiatives. The approach emphasises the importance of clear learning objectives, learner-centred training, self-awareness of learning, and a focus on organisational (rather than individual) capacity development. We aim for high-quality, relevant, accessible, and modern training, and use relevant digital systems like our learning platform (on fabo.org) to produce, convey and communicate learning. Our objective has been to elevate the quality of collaboration between SMC and our members and partners, through knowledge-sharing, expertise, and best practices via a range of activities, including single events, webinars, expert lectures, extended facilitated online courses, regional workshops in Africa and Asia, learning evaluations and Communities of Practice. By providing training and adhering to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), we strive to foster accountability and prioritise the needs of individuals affected by crises in our interventions.

During the reporting period SMC focused on capacity building within the following thematic areas:

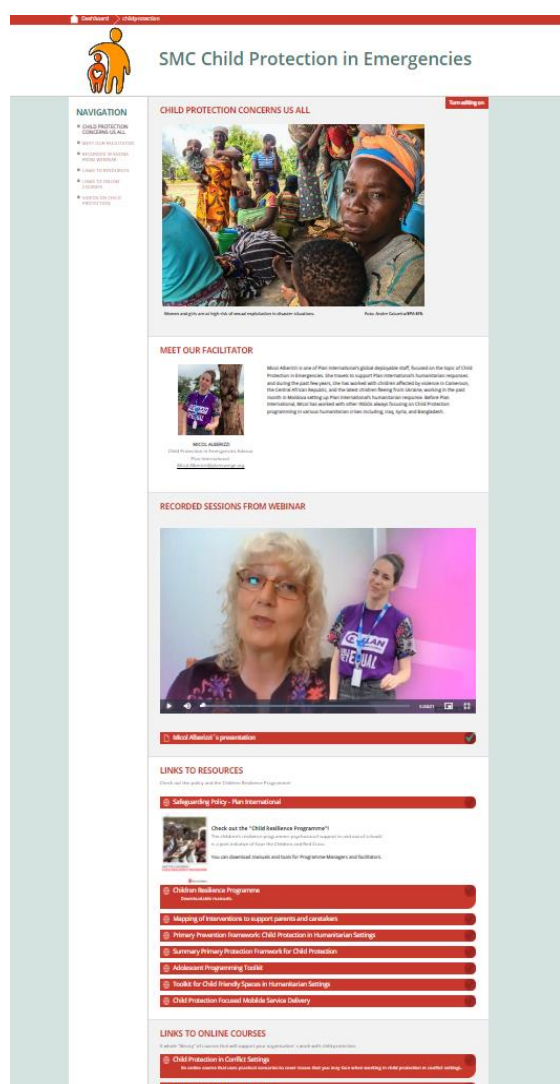
- CHS
- CHS Training of Trainers
- CHS follow-up workshops
- Gender Equity

- SMC Protection Series: Gender Issues in Humanitarian Response/ Safeguarding in Humanitarian Action /Child protection in Emergencies
- MEAL for Humanitarian Professionals
- Financial Management for Humanitarian Professionals
- Field Manager Course: Equity, Inclusion and Diversity; Managing People in Humanitarian Settings, Logistics, MEAL, Communication, Media, and Advocacy, Project Management in Humanitarian Settings and Safety and Security; Complaint and Response Mechanism (CRM)
- IT-training
- Security training (HEAT)
- Protection from Sexual Exploitation
- Abuse and Harassment (*PSEAH*)
- Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Investigation
- Triple Nexus; Disaster Risk Reduction and Conflict Sensitivity.

SMC has also enhanced the advisory and accompanying role towards member and partner organisations to strengthen systems, routines, and knowledge through follow-up on organisational assessments of member organisations. Organisations with both humanitarian and development work have also benefited through *The Good Stewardship Initiative 2022-2026*, funded by Sida CIVSAM, where our head of finance, controllers and a capacity development advisor offered training on procurement processes, donor harmonisation and agreement compliance during 2022.

## 6.1 Challenges and lessons learnt

One of the main challenges in humanitarian capacity development is the limited availability of resources. Partners state that few donors are willing to invest in partner capacity development. Therefore, SMC's learning initiatives have been much appreciated by our partners. Another significant challenge is overcoming language barriers. Since much of the humanitarian work takes place in francophone countries, and capacity building in French is rarely offered, our



*SMC Learning platform where participants can access videos and learning resources from each course.*

West African partners highly valued the seven courses given in French by French-speaking facilitators or by simultaneous translation to French. Another challenging factor is that people may be hesitant to adopt new practices and ideas. As SMC strives for organisational change and not capacity development for individuals, we urge the organisations to register at least two participants to each learning initiative, so that they can implement their learning together and gain more strength in their advocacy for better organisational systems and procedures.

SMC sees capacity development as an ongoing process that requires continuous learning and improvement. Series of initiatives and longer facilitated online courses provide opportunities for deeper learning, addressing gaps, and reinforcing skills and knowledge over time, allowing for more in-depth learning and opportunities to apply and practice new skills and knowledge.

Measuring impact can be challenging, but it is necessary. To determine whether the training is achieving its intended goals, we use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. We keep track of participation and attendance; offer pre-tests, post-tests, and scenario tests; and gather data through focus groups and surveys. Course evaluations and expert-led learning evaluations have also contributed to the improvement of our

capacity development initiatives. We have learned that new technology can facilitate capacity development. To ease the transition into a pandemic situation, and later to the post-pandemic, SMC joined the Fabo Learning Platform (fabo.org) in 2020. Fabo is a member-driven learning community for civil society organisations dedicated to sharing learning technology and resources. We use the Fabo platform to support all our learning initiatives.

*“The online portal where you can refer to is great and lastly, the training tests per module jog our memory. I also found the pictorials/graphics very helpful.” – Participant in Financial Management Course 2022*

The transition to online training has not been all easy. A lesson learned from our online courses has been that unstable internet connection becomes a problem for many of our partners in Africa and Asia. Participants who connect via their mobile phones often cannot participate with their camera on, as this leads to high data consumption. This limits their ability to participate in group dialogues etc. Despite these problems, we conclude that online courses enable more people to participate in the workshops and give valuable contact with partners in the field.

## 6.2 Results

The capacity development efforts during the reporting period led to improved response to emergencies and efficiency, and ultimately to saved lives. SMC has continuously gathered data from participants, to evaluate the capacity development work. By building the capacity of partner organisations, SMC's humanitarian capacity development initiatives helped ensure that local communities are better equipped to respond to emergencies and to build resilience to future disasters.

*“You may not imagine how much value the course has added to me and my organisation. The course has not only prepared me for the future, but it already supported me to address areas especially in line with Logistics and MEAL in humanitarian action.”* – Esther Nalunga, ADRA Uganda (Participant in Field Manager Course 2022)

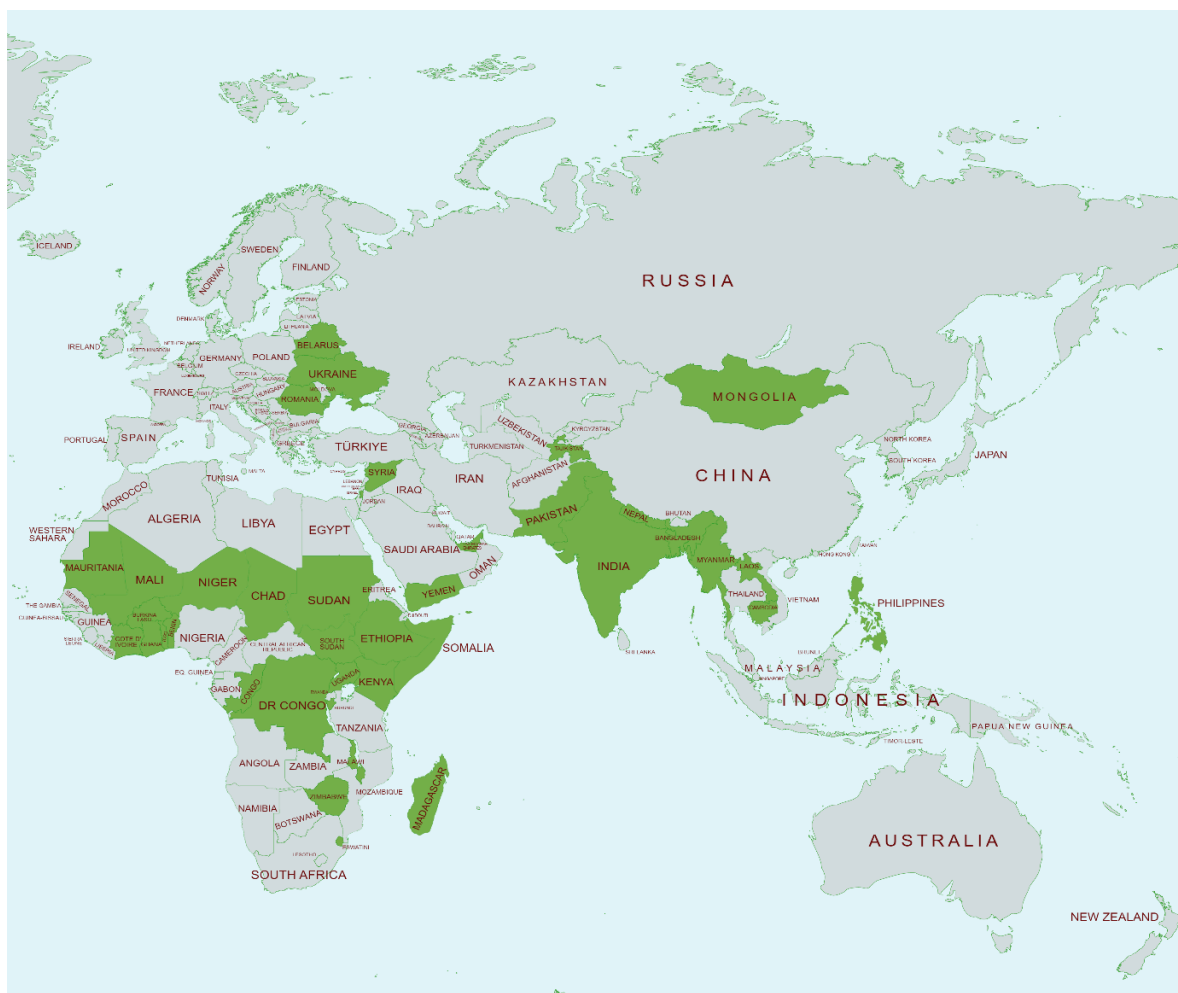
*“After participating in the CHS Trainer of Trainers course we have offered CHS online courses to our partners in the field.”* – Angelina M. Twinomujuni, Monitor officer, ERIKS East Africa Regional Office Milward Mwanvani, Global Head of Humanitarian Affairs and triple nexus, LM International, George Ndung'u Chira, Monitor Officer, ERIKS Kenya

*“An important take-away from the course is keeping the community involved in every stage of intervention for social accountability of the implementation and sustainability of the project.”* – Participant in Field Manager Course

SMC's capacity development initiatives have helped improve accountability by ensuring that staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their roles effectively and transparently.

*“I feel so empowered. Together with my colleagues, I now focus on the CHS Action Plan to put the theory into practice.”* – Participant in the 3-day CHS-course, May 2021

*“The gained knowledge about Complaints and response mechanism will be incorporated in our organisations’ practices. We foresee that this will increase community trust in programmes, mitigate negative impacts of our activities and promote sustainability as communities will begin to own the services CRM.” – Participant in the CRM course, November 2022*



*During the reporting period, SMC conducted trainings and courses for participants from the highlighted countries, in line with our organisational mission to empower individuals and communities through learning initiatives.*

SMC’s capacity development initiatives have resulted in improved quality of programming, with staff better equipped to design and implement effective interventions that meet the needs of affected populations.

*“The Financial Management course gave me a good overview over key topics in financial management. I find that the recommended procedures and policies will help us to prevent and detect mismanagement.” – Participant in Financial Management course 2022*

*I have learned about how you as a field manager can create a healthy working environment where people with diverse background, experience, perspectives, and*

*talents can actively work together towards common goals and objectives.* –  
Participant in Field Manager course 2022

The cumulative headcount of attendees for our training initiatives stands at **831 participants**, primarily through weeklong or 3-day trainings, as well as extensive online courses. Given the occurrence of series of trainings, the unique individual count is lower than this figure.

It should be noted that SMC's member organisations support humanitarian initiatives through Sida-funded programs in selected countries, while relying on their own funding sources in others. To ensure sustainability and impact of the humanitarian work, all partners have been included in the trainings.

## 7. Financial management

The financial administration of the Sida humanitarian intervention 2017-2022 has been strengthened on all levels, from SMC to implementing partner level. SMC has been proactive in strengthening the capacity both on member and partner organisation level, providing ongoing support throughout the intervention from start until end, on topics such as budgeting, reporting and audit procedures. SMC also provided specific courses and workshops on the same topics as well as on understanding and reporting on currency exchange gains and losses. SMC facilitated meetings with member organisations within the humanitarian team, in 2018 to discuss and interpret the Humanitarian agreement, and in 2019 focusing on the specific requirements and conditions member and partner organisations needed to meet within the humanitarian intervention. SMC staff attended anti-corruption workshops at Sida Partnership Forum. This was helpful in developing our internal anti-corruption guidelines and in strengthening our dialogue with member and partner organisations on the topic. SMC's contribution to strengthening our humanitarian partners' financial capacity to plan and report on humanitarian interventions was confirmed by the system audit conducted by Sida in 2019, where good results and improvements since SMC's first implementation of humanitarian interventions in 2014 were noted.

In addition, on a general level and across different types of funding, SMC arranges yearly meetings with SMC controllers, providing an opportunity for exchange and dialogue on how to interpret Sida and SMC guidelines, as well as on improvement of procedures and processes within financial management.

### 7.1 Challenges and lessons learnt

The Financial administration, monitoring and reporting of the humanitarian intervention 2017-2022 offered many challenges and valuable learning opportunities for SMC, our member and partner organisations. During the reporting period, SMC has seen improvement in both financial policies and guidelines; know-how of budgeting and monitoring; and other financial management aspects of the implementation and reporting. For some member organisations, improvements were seen from year to year within specific areas, such as improved budgeting processes, monitoring and reporting processes, where they quickly harmonised their policies and guidelines with those of Sida and SMC. Other member and partner organisations'

adaptation and streamlining occurred gradually during the entire implementation period. Towards the end of the extended program period, we have seen partners implement their own anti-corruption policies rather than simply adapting SMC's policy. In addition, several partners have trained their staff within financial management and anti-corruption.

One challenge was in budgeting for overhead costs, using well defined cost sharing models to obtain a reasonable cost sharing percentage within projects. Many of SMC's member and partner organisations now have a strengthened capacity to present their costs sharing models as part of their application.

Another challenge was how to budget for the re-investment of inventories and capital goods, such as bore drills. In 2018 this led to intense discussions between SMC and our (then) member organisation IAS, as the Sida agreement did not allow for budgeting for provisions or reserves. The challenge remains for partner organisations such as IAS Kenya/LM, to secure funding of Major re-investments of material assets needed to implement certain water projects.

Other challenges and learning opportunities related to the preparedness to procure scarce goods within a short period of time such as during RRM interventions or during the COVID-19 pandemic. To facilitate this, SMC obtained approval from Sida for our member organisation to use Sida's general procurement guidelines issued in 2020, to better meet the challenge of understanding the requirements to work with pre-qualified suppliers (since the procurement guidelines in the SMC/Sida agreement were not as detailed). In 2020, one Major discussion evolved around the possibility for ERIKS to use the negotiated principle as a procurement method due to challenges of COVID-19.

Member and partner organisations also improved over time in their monitoring of budget deviations, specifically related to currency exchange gain/loss. Towards the end of the implementation of the program in 2022, requests for approvals to use currency exchange gains were commonplace, compared to the first implementation years. SMC held a workshop on currency exchange management and reporting in 2019. We had hoped that the new Sida guidelines would provide more clarity. However, the confusion on how to report on currency exchange gains/losses still remains a challenge for some partners organisations. SMC and member organisations also experienced that auditors at different levels in the reporting chain would disagree about the method used. Together with our member organisations, SMC would like to request that Sida revisit their guidelines and/or provide more detailed tools for currency exchange reporting.

The direction regarding whether Sida needed to approve all budget alignments varied over the years, depending on who was the responsible desk officer and/or controller at Sida, and SMC had to navigate regarding our independence to approve budget deviations without gaining prior approval from Sida. This meant that the amount of budget revisions managed at all four levels before approval was given by Sida varied over the years. This handling proved many times inefficient and time-consuming, especially in RRM interventions. SMC has seen the benefits of mid-term reports, as a good tool to help members and partners better monitor the financial outcome in implementations.

At the beginning of the period, some members, partners and their auditors did not pay enough attention to the specific reporting requirements outlined in agreements for humanitarian



projects. An issue that took time to solve with one partner organisation was that their auditor refused to issue an ISA 800/805 audit report and insisted that an ISA 700 audit report was sufficient. Towards the final years of the extended program period, almost all stakeholders followed the agreed upon Terms of Reference for audit without SMC having to request amendments to the audit reports.

SMC concludes that the use of the complaint response mechanism has helped to discourage financial irregularities in the implementation. We could see examples in the last implementing years of how it became easier to identify irregularities, due to good complaints mechanism tools.

Remaining challenges for SMC, not specific to the implementation of humanitarian interventions exclusively, is that of harmonization of reporting requirements. As the trend has moved towards stricter and stricter audit and reporting requirements, it has put additional focus on the fact that the administration contribution of 7 % is too low to cover the actual cost of maintaining quality control of project administration at member organisation level.

Out of the 64 projects implemented, five deviation cases were identified and reported to Sida. SMC takes this as an indication that SMC and partners have conducted more than adequate financial management of the implemented projects during the program period. SMC has focused on improving and strengthening the internal control on all levels of the partnership, the source of verification being the quality enhancement of our financial reporting, compared to the earlier implementing years. Still, the issue of Sida needing to share the risk that emanates from implementing humanitarian and development interventions is becoming more and more relevant. This is a discussion that remains between Sida and its Strategic Partners, from the partner side handled by the networks of secretaries general and heads of programme.

## 8. Key reflections

SMC has successfully fulfilled its mission to be a grants distributor of Sida humanitarian funding providing quality support and control of public funding as well as support to our humanitarian team members during 2017-2022.

SMC learned the strengths and the weaknesses in our network during the six years and have had the possibility to focus on building a strong network, learning from each other in the humanitarian team, and through implementing capacity building initiatives.

Regarding Major projects, learnings from the programmatic period include the importance of sustainability and long-term planning in aid programs to ensure continued impact beyond immediate crisis response. The majority of the 35 Major humanitarian operations conducted between 2017 and 2022 have deliberately incorporated strategies for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience.

The Rapid Response Mechanism funding 2017 – 2020 allowed SMC to respond quickly to emergencies and reach affected communities in hard-to-reach areas. 29 Rapid Response Mechanism projects were implemented in 15 countries and in addition to that SMC was able to respond rapidly to extra funding requests in 2017 and 2019 for humanitarian projects in Yemen, South Sudan and Syria (formally considered Major operations). One learning from the work with rapid responses is what capacity is needed to uphold the ability to respond quickly and efficiently. In the SMC network 24 local partners in 17 countries implemented

humanitarian projects during the period of time, several of them working in difficult contexts, still proving ability to quickly scale up and adjust to new crises, proving that the ability to be a part of the RRM system is found within the network.

Capacity to rapidly respond is also needed in Member organisations and at SMC office, both in regard to desk officer/coordinator and controller, to be able to be on duty at all times, and to be well informed on the latest changes in the humanitarian situation in the contexts where we have the ability to respond to make quick assessments. Internally, SMC early formed a workgroup and organisation preparedness to quickly meet the rapidness needed to manage RRM interventions. However, the staffing situation at SMC office has been fluctuating over the years, depending on budget, administrative organisation, and on sudden changes relating to personal issues. One learning for future engagement the importance of a sustainable and stable humanitarian organisation prepared for sudden humanitarian needs, at SMC and MO level.

Regarding cross-cutting issues, several changes and developments took place during the years included in the report. One development is that SMC integrated gender considerations into our policies, strategies, and programming. SMC also developed and implemented a new policy on conflict sensitivity, enforced throughout the organisation and its partners. SMC has provided adequate trainings for partners and contributed to the strengthening of capacity and the resilience of our local partners, both as individual staff and as organisations. By building the capacity of local partners, SMC's humanitarian capacity development initiatives helped to ensure that local communities are better equipped to respond to emergencies and to build resilience to future disasters. The promotion of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus has been a part of SMC's humanitarian strategy for 2017-2021 and the Resilience effort.

In 2017, SMC released a new policy for Environment, Climate, DRR and Resilience leading to Environment and Climate being mainstreamed in all operations. SMC notices that it's the humanitarian member organisations of SMC, i.e., ADRA Sweden, ERIKS, LM and PMU have been in the forefront to promote resilience and addressing environmental degradation and climate change in cooperation with their partner organisations since 2017.

Throughout the programmatic period, SMC has been committed to the localisation agenda. All interventions have been designed and implemented by professional local organisations well-established in the local context, with the majority of these organisations being faith-based and/or connected to local churches. SMC has contributed to strengthened cooperation and networking among Swedish humanitarian actors as well as active lobbying for the localisation agenda and the Sendai framework.

SMC conducted field monitoring during the specified period, including visits to Bangladesh, South Sudan, Syria, Kenya, Lebanon, Jordan (for a PMU Partner conference in Yemen), Palestine, and Uganda. However, an important lesson learned was the need for prioritizing follow-up visits to the field, along with early efforts in traveling to high-risk contexts by allocating budget and planning resources in advance. The field monitoring faced challenges due to budget cuts and pandemic-related travel restrictions. However, more field visits could have been conducted both before and after the pandemic. Consequently, SMC has taken several measures to address these outcomes. We have updated our travel routines, developed a high-risk travel guide, and introduced an online course for safe traveling.

The financial administration of the humanitarian intervention from 2017 to 2022 presented various challenges and learning opportunities for SMC, member organisations, and partners.

These challenges included budgeting, reporting on currency exchange gains, procuring scarce goods, and addressing inconsistencies in reporting requirements. However, through capacity-building initiatives, workshops, and ongoing support, significant improvements were made in financial management and reporting, resulting in enhanced financial control. Ongoing discussions with Sida and strategic partners continue to address the need for risk-sharing and harmonisation in future interventions.

## 9. Ways forward

Nine years of cooperation within the SMC humanitarian network 2014-2022, has created a stable foundation for future fruitful and effective humanitarian cooperation.

The humanitarian team of SMC continue to uphold the humanitarian competence within the network, and also to implement humanitarian work.

ADRA Sweden will continue to have one Humanitarian Coordinator and the office staff regularly participate in trainings through SMC. ADRA Sweden is 2023 working with humanitarian projects in Yemen, Syria, Ukraine and Lebanon.

ERIKS' has two Humanitarian coordinators at the Swedish head office. When there is a humanitarian crisis in one of ERIKS' program countries the humanitarian coordinators work together with the regional office staff (6-8 Program Monitoring Officers with an over-all responsibility of development and humanitarian work). Humanitarian work is currently implemented in Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Kenya. ERIKS over-all prioritized areas for capacity development are closely linked to humanitarian work as many of the organisations' programs are implemented in humanitarian contexts. This includes protection, conflict sensitivity, DRR as well as trainings related to CHS. Partners regularly exchange learnings and are actively engage in local cluster and relevant networks within their specific area of expertise.

LM has more than 200 staff involved in humanitarian work in the different countries, currently working in humanitarian projects in Chad, Ethiopia, Niger, Romania, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, Ukraine and Yemen. The humanitarian capacity is maintained through in-house capacity development sessions online or in-person when program/project managers meet, Bi-weekly global program meetings where topics of interest are discussed (online) and through webinars, seminars and workshops organised through various networks where LM is an active member, e.g., EUCORD, VOICE, PHAP, ECHO's ELSE and SMC.

PMU has two full time positions working with humanitarian affairs in its Head office in Stockholm. PMU also has a specific project manager in its office in Bukavu, DRC, who is funded by humanitarian funds provided by ECHO to run an ECHO project supporting the Survivor of sexual violence unit of the Panzi hospital. PMU is currently working in DR Congo, Ethiopia, Nepal, Pakistan, Poland, South Sudan, Turkey, Ukraine and Yemen with humanitarian projects. PMU participates in several instances that serves to strengthen their capacity within the humanitarian sector. They are a member of the CHS Alliance and an ECHO FPA holder, which means that they are eligible to participate in courses and trainings held by ECHO, both relating to compliance with ECHO as a donor but also in terms of good practices within the sector at large. Finally, PMU participate in the EU level network EU-CORD which

regularly hosts workshops and capacity building sessions relating to for example localisation, nexus, anticipatory action etc.

SMC represent 29 member organisations supporting development or humanitarian work in about 50 countries, many of the organisations being present within the area of humanitarian-development nexus.

The humanitarian team currently present humanitarian cooperation with over 40 partners that are either solely humanitarian or organisations with proven ability to work humanitarian, in: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Mauritania, Moldova, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, South Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

In addition to that, ADRA has a flexibility in its network as it comprises of 120 country offices globally. When a larger emergency happens in any country the ADRA network gets together and supports the emergency together, both extra staff and resources. In case of a sudden emergency a national emergency management policy is activated within 24 hours the country office receives about initial funds from within the network to start a rapid response.

SMC would like to maintain our humanitarian capacity building during the period 2023-2025, ahead of a potential new application to become strategic humanitarian partner to Sida from 2025 and onwards.

We believe that our global humanitarian network would be strengthened by developing a resource base of in-country trainers through regional “Trainer of Trainers”- courses in Africa, Asia and Europe.

Areas that we would like to embrace are: Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence in Humanitarian Action; socialization and training when it comes to the updated Core Humanitarian Standard (2024) and a series of other topics relevant to our humanitarian partners.

*Alvik 2023-05-29*

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We are a platform of churches and organisations who believe in human rights and work for dignity for all. Our network contributes to building peaceful, equal and sustainable societies.

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