

WEEKLY PRIORITISATION

Methodology brief

ACAPS carries out a weekly update that provides a snapshot of current humanitarian priorities and recent events. The primary objective is to inform humanitarian decision makers by presenting a summary of major humanitarian crises, both recent and protracted. This brief details the methodology used to prioritise countries.

Indicators

ACAPS prioritisation divides countries into four categories:

- No severity
- Situation of concern
- Humanitarian crisis
- Severe humanitarian crisis

This prioritisation is based on two broad concepts: the impact of the current crisis and the longer-term underlying vulnerability. Inclusion criteria are applied to ensure that only countries which are currently facing a humanitarian crisis, as opposed to long-term underdevelopment, are included. These criteria dictate that a country is only selected when more than 1% of the population and more than 100,000 people are reported in need or affected after a clearly identified event (exceptions are made for countries with very small populations). If a country reaches this threshold, the severity of situation will be assessed using a composite measure, which consists of five indicators:

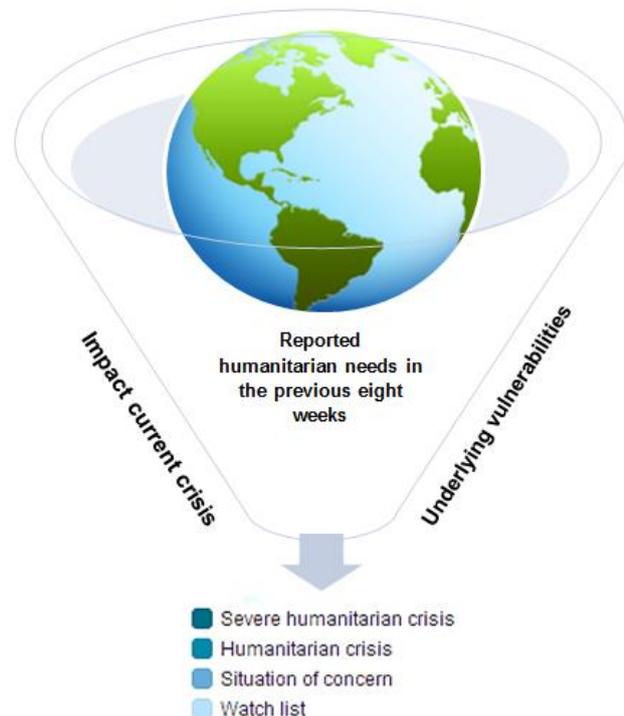
1. Impact of the current crisis

- The **number of people in need** in a country defined as a percentage of the total population. The affected population is expressed as the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance during a period of emergency¹. Structural development problems (such as chronically food insecure, people living below poverty line etc.) are not included. In the absence of comparable data on how various crises threaten lives and dignity, the fraction of members of society who are considered affected by an emergency proxies as the best available impact measure. The information is obtained from media reports, information published by national governments and humanitarian actors, including the UN and NGOs, and updated every week
- The level of **access** humanitarian organisations have to the affected area and population is an indicator measuring the extent to which the existing needs can be addressed by actors such as the government or humanitarian organisations. The prioritisation is based on secondary data from organisations operating in the field, information from the Aid Worker Security Database, the Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor and the World Bank Landmine Contamination, Casualties and Clearance Databank.

¹ Centre for Research on Epidemiology of Disasters, *The EM-DAT glossary*.

2. Underlying vulnerability

- **Uprooted displacement** captures the IDPs and refugees present in-country in the year before the crisis, as a percentage of the total population of a country. It reflects one of the underlying vulnerabilities of a country. It is updated every year, based on ECHO figures.
- **Human development index (HDI):** HDI is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education, and income indices that ranks countries into four tiers of human development. It is updated every year, based on UNDP figures.
- **Under-five mortality rate:** is the probability of a child born in a specific year or period dying before reaching the age of five. It reflects the social, economic and environmental conditions in which children (and others in society) live and thereby captures the underlying vulnerabilities of a country. It is updated every year, based on WHO figures.



Each of the five indicators is assigned a score between 0 and 3. The median of these scores represents the level of prioritisation.

Calculation of the composite measure

Each indicator is calculated in a different way, with different timeframes for inclusion of information and distinct cut off points:

1. People in need or recently affected

Figures about people in need or recently affected are updated on a weekly basis for all countries that qualify for the prioritisation. For sudden-onset disasters, if the existence of a humanitarian caseload is not mentioned for eight consecutive weeks, the count will be reset to zero. If there are reasons to believe that the lack of update is due to underreporting and that the needs persist, the number is maintained.

The number of people in need or recently affected is expressed as a percentage of the national population. The cut-off points of the indicator are similar to those used for criteria five (Displacement) and are based on cut-off points used by DG ECHO in its Global Needs Assessment tool.

Refugees will be counted within the host country, for instance the Malian refugees in Burkina Faso will be included in the number of people in need or recently affected people within Burkina Faso.

2. Humanitarian access

Based on the ACAPS Access Monitoring Database² the access indicator is measured in three dimensions:

² Notes on humanitarian access from different humanitarian crises have been reviewed (e.g. Somalia, Yemen).

- Humanitarian access to the affected population
- Access of the affected population to humanitarian aid
- Security related constraints for humanitarians and affected population.

Each dimension is measured through specific proxy indicators:

- Humanitarian access
 - Impediments to entry into country (bureaucratic and administrative)
 - Restriction of movement (impediments to freedom of movement and/or administrative restrictions)
 - Interference into humanitarian activities
 - Violence against personnel, facilities and assets
- Access of the affected population to humanitarian aid
 - Denial of needs or entitlements
 - Restriction and obstruction of access to aid
- Security related constraints
 - Active hostilities
 - Presence of mines and improvised explosive devices
 - Physical environment (obstacles related to terrain, climate, lack of infrastructure)

Using primarily field agency reports, the ACAPS team determines the level of access that humanitarian organisations have in affected areas on a scale from 0 to 9, having assigned a 1 for each indicator if the conditions of the indicator are met and a 0 if conditions are not met (1=Yes, 0=No). The indicator is monitored on a weekly basis.

3. Under-five mortality rate

The under-five mortality rate is derived from the WHO World Health Statistics, which is updated annually. The cut-off points are derived from the DG ECHO's Global Needs Assessment report.

4. Displacement

IDPs and refugees present in-country the previous year as a percentage of the total population of a country and the related cut-off points are based on the DG ECHO's Global Needs Assessment report. These figures are updated once a year.

5. Human Development Index

The human development index score is based upon the annual HDI rankings. The cut-off point has been designed to equally allocate the different possible scores among the four different levels.

The Global Overview criteria and cut-off points

Severity Level	Recently affected (% of total pop)	Humanitarian access to affected population	<5 mortality (per 1.000 live births)	Displacement (% of total pop)	Human Development
3	> 10%	>6	> 90	> 10%	Low HDI (0–0.549)
2	> 3% AND < 10%	4-5,9	55-89.99	> 3% AND < 10%	Medium HDI (0.550–0.699)
1	> 1% AND < 3%	2-3,9	19-54.99	> 1% AND < 3%	High HDI (0.700–0.800)
0	> 0,1% AND < 1%	0-1,9	0-18.99	> 0,1% AND < 1%	Very High HDI (0.801–1)

Inclusion and exclusion of outliers

ACAPs prioritisation deals with four types of country:

1. Countries with a low underlying vulnerability but a high impact of a recent disaster (e.g. Syria).
2. Countries with a low underlying vulnerability and a low impact of recent disaster/no recent disasters (e.g. United States).
3. Countries with a high underlying vulnerability and a high impact of a recent disaster (e.g. Yemen).
4. Countries with a high underlying vulnerability and a low impact of recent disaster/no recent disasters (e.g. Algeria).

To ensure countries of type 1, such as Syria, are prioritised appropriately, ACAPS applies the 'double three rule'. If the country is both prioritised highest in the 'People in need or recently affected' and the 'access' criteria, the country will end up in the highest priority score (*Severe humanitarian crisis*) regardless of the score on underlying vulnerabilities. For example:

Syria Scoring elements	Criteria	Score
Impact of current crisis	Recently affected	3
	Access	3
Underlying vulnerability	Displacement	2
	HDI	2
	Under five mortality rate	0
	MEDIAN	2
	ADAPTED MEDIAN (2x"3" rule)	3

To filter type 4 countries, which are suffering from chronic underdevelopment but have not experienced a recent disaster, ACAPS applies the inclusion criteria described above.

Sources

The prioritisation process uses secondary data review and structured analytical techniques. Each week, all emergencies are monitored; information on some 150 countries is collected from publicly available media, academic and humanitarian sources, and chronologically archived in a database.