

**Mothers First Submission on the Zero Draft of the CFS Policy Recommendations on reducing Inequalities for Food Security and Nutrition April 17TH 2024 (Final)**

**Prepared by Pat Nc Mahon**

## **Overview**

This input marks the 4th formal contribution of Mothers First into the Inequalities work stream. From the scoping document to this the Zero draft of the inequalities work stream. In the process we have witnessed both the document's and our own evolution of thought. The Zero draft is warmly welcomed because within the 41 recommendations lies a clear and distinct pathway to reach the most affected by food security and malnutrition.

Our policy inputs have focused on different aspects of **acute food insecurity**. That is because the greatest inequality in the food systems lies where food insecurity and associated malnutrition are highest both in prevalence and severity. **Each of these 26 countries** have Humanitarian and Development Response Plans in place. These response plans recognise the human tragedy of the high prevalence of extreme hunger as well as the need for external donor support to implement the plans.

The response plans are developed within a framework which meets people's immediate needs as well as **building resilience** through development programs such as livelihoods programming health and education. Each country's Humanitarian Development Plan which is available on [this](#) interactive website hosted by the UN. The World Food Program vision is to *"pursue integrated programming and collaborative partnerships, working across the humanitarian–development– peace nexus"* [WFP Strategic Vision 2022-2026](#)

Each Humanitarian Response Plan fits the glove of the [Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crisis](#) (CFS-FFA) while also aligning with the Humanitarian Accountability Framework of [Sphere](#).

The inclusion of the Humanitarian Development Peace (HDP) Nexus is a welcome development and is in line the Special Rapporteur on the Right to food contribution to this work stream in January which stated that

*"The CFS should not only encourage countries and regions to apply the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises, but it can also use the Framework within CFS activities in advancing global policies and recommendations and by also promoting its application within other multilateral settings"*

**The singular bottle neck** implementing Humanitarian Development Response Plans have been years of chronic under-funding from the donor community. This has meant and means that the development aspects of humanitarian programming which build resilience and facilitate the transition away from emergency response are effectively not happening.

Since 2015, life changing acute hunger has increased from 60 million to 355 million people. We are in the midst of the global food crisis' ' and underfunding for Humanitarian Development Response plans is predicted to reach over 70% this year.

*“The **historic funding decline** amidst a persistent global food crisis means **acute food insecurity** is expected to **increase significantly in severity in 2024 and beyond**, with consequences weighing heavier on women and girls” [WFP Operational Plan 2024](#).*

The inequalities report offers us a framework of what needs to be done to create equitable food systems however finance remains the single biggest inhibitor to equitable food systems. For the furthest behind, that finance is completely dependent on the donor community.

Article 2.1 of [The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) is clear both on the responsibility and level of international assistance required to achieve the right to food.

### **Building on past inputs**

Our 3 previous inputs have focused on

- The difference difference between acute and chronic hunger
- Geographical locations of the most food insecure
- Fiscal Space
- Human Rights Framework and Duty Bearers
- Fulfilling the mandate of the CFS

**This submission will** detail how Humanitarian Response Plans align specifically within the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted crisis and the Inequalities report. Operating within the framework of the HDP Nexus will help us unite under our common flag of leaving no one behind.

**The narrative of change needs** to center around the 300 million people across 26 countries who fall within Humanitarian Response Plans. We will seek to rebuff the notion that the international donor community trillion dollar economies can invest no more than 19 billion of the 50 billion dollars required to build resilient food systems for the most food insecure people in the world.

While it is disappointing that acute food security is not mentioned in the zero draft we applaud the inclusion of the triple Gem which is the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus and it serves as this submission anchor point.

### **Why Acute Food Insecurity as our Submission focus.**

We have steadfastly remained focused on acute food insecurity within this process because it is here that extreme poverty lies. The poorest of the poor. When you cannot afford food consistently for days on end you have lost everything. Intersectionality is the compounding effect of multiple vulnerabilities. In other words, when you are weak, it takes very little to make you weaker.

**Acute food insecurity** threatens the lives and livelihoods regardless of cause, context or duration. These are our brothers and sisters and they are the furthest behind.

**Overall the scope of the 41 key points** outlined in the Zero draft are to be applauded. Within them lies the foundation and framework to reach the most food insecure and malnourished people in the world. In doing so aligning itself the mandate of the CFS and the clarion call of the Sustainable Development Goals to leave no one behind.

This input paper will frame itself around the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus as the framework vehicle to reach the most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition. This submission will look at

- The Humanitarian and Development nature of Humanitarian Response Plans.
- Alleging Humanitarian plans to the inequalities report.
- The Global architecture and mandates to sustainably end acute hunger.
- Fiscal space and human rights obligation.

This submission will layer humanitarian and development costed plans to the broad ethos of the inequalities report and the narrower focus on the CFS Framework for Action in Protracted Crisis. Finance is the central enabler to action and inaction to the development resilient and equitable food systems for the most food insecure people in the world.

### **Narrative of understanding around the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus**

It is very much welcomed the inclusion of the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus in the Zero Draft. The Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus is a true narrative builder around food security because it looks holistically at the interrelationship of frameworks for humanitarian and development actions framed within the peace and non peace continuum.

The pathways leading from violent conflict to food insecurity or from food insecurity to conflict are complex but well known. The peace dimension of the Nexus is not explored in this submission as it is outside our experience. This paper on [Food Security in Conflict and Peace building Settings](#) adds an important layer for consideration perhaps summarized in this quote

Financing Peace: “President Barack Obama argued that investment in agricultural productivity that reduces the incidence of hunger and vulnerability “advances international peace and security”

### **Humanitarian Response plans**

The ethos of the humanitarian response plans is to transition from emergency life saving interventions to resilience building programs. Humanitarian response plans are developed **when “*there is evidence that the magnitude and/or severity of acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition exceeds the local resources and capacities needed to respond effectively, leading to a request for the urgent mobilization of the international community*”** [Global Report on Food Crisis 2023](#) (GRFC 2023)

The unfortunate reality is that chronic underfunding by the international donor community means that life saving interventions need to be prioritized at the expense of longer term development programming

### **How the Humanitarian Response plans integrated development programming, Case example.**

This is the data is extracted from the 2024 [Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia](#)

The table is a summary of the holistic nature of the Humanitarian Response Plan for the furthest behind in the food systems in Somalia and all other countries with HRP. Humanitarian response Plans have consistently remained underfunded. Ocha 2023 <https://fts.unocha.org/plans/overview/2023>

Total cost 2024	People in need	Cost	Funding	Overall coverage
Humanitarian Response plans	6.9 million	1.59 billion	160 million	10.1%
Cluster	People in need	Cost	Funding	Coverage
Nutrition	4.8 Million	165 million	3.7 million	2.2%
Food security and livelihoods	4.3 Million	560 Million	31 Million	5.5%
Social protection	3.8 Million	173 Million	9.5 Million	5.5%
Health	6.6 Million	122 Million	2.3 Million	1.9%
Education	2.4 Million	67 Million	3.7 Million	5.5
Water and sanitation	6.6 Million	146 Million	5.8 Million	4.0%
Shelter	4.6 Million	80 Million	1.2 Million	1.5%

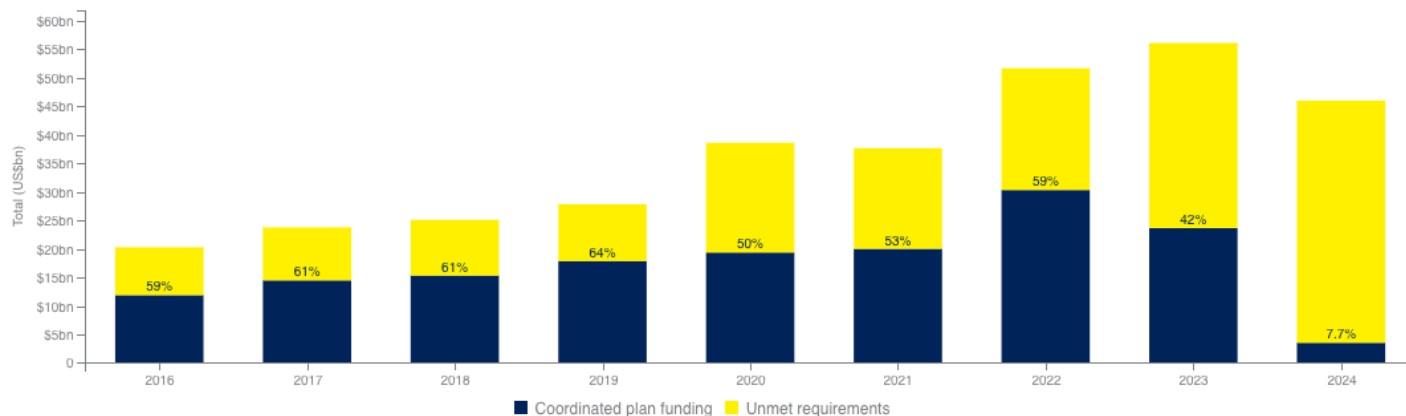
### Impact of historic underfunding of humanitarian response plans

Chronic underfunding of Humanitarian Response Plans means that the development approach of the plans which focus on building resilience are too inefficient to transcend extreme poverty.

A central critique of Mothers First on the inequalities report was not on the holistic set of solutions identified, rather the fiscal space particularly in low and middle income countries to implement the policy recommendations. Humanitarian Response Plans show exactly where these financial gaps are and the requirement for international assistance. .

Humanitarian Response Plans directly align with the mandate of the CFS to reach the most food insecure and malnourished people in the world. Their targeted approach aligns with the ethos of the Inequalities Reports and are the costed and targeted approach for the Framework for Action in Protracted Crisis.

*“The **historic funding decline** amidst a persistent global food crisis means **acute food insecurity** is expected to **increase significantly in severity in 2024 and beyond**, with consequences weighing heavier on women and girls” WFP Operational Plan 2024.*



The percentage labels shown in each bar represent the tracked global appeal coverage for each year. Amounts shown in the latest year (far right bar) are figures for the year to date.

### Barrier to implementation of Humanitarian Response plans

Humanitarian Response Plans have 2 overarching realities. The first is that they are developed and cost effective to reach the most food insecure people with life saving interventions combined with resilience building programs.

The second is that they recognise that the countries concerned do not have the fiscal capacity to implement the plans. This means that without funding from the donor community programs go unimplemented or get scaled back. The single biggest impediment and inhibitor to the implementation of the Humanitarian Response Plans is finance.

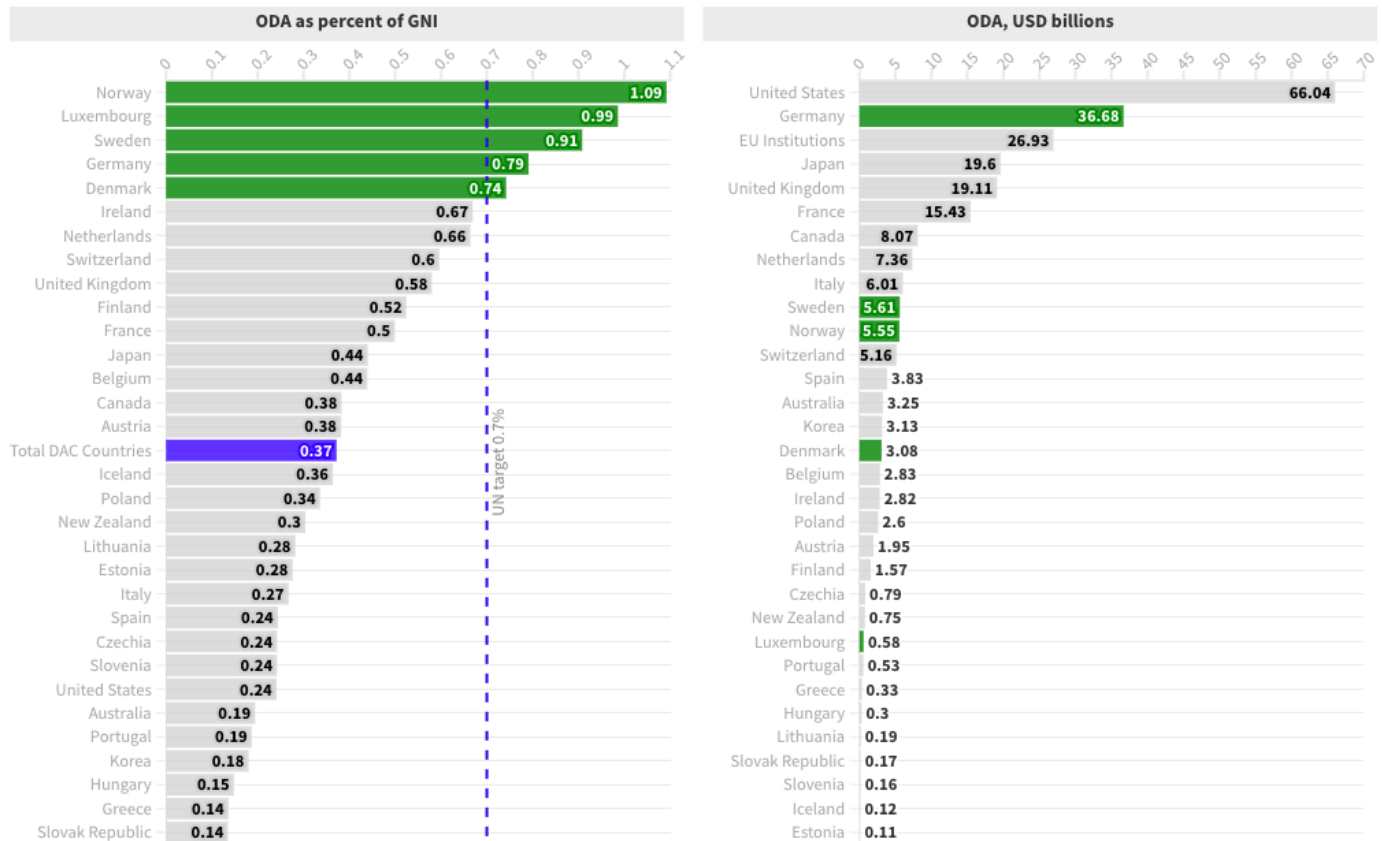
### International Finance for Humanitarian Response Plans within the Covenant

[The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) remains the most ratified of all the treaties and is recognized as the most closely related to the Right to Food. It is important to note that "Ratification assumes a legal obligation to implement the rights recognised in that treaty."

In the specific case of Humanitarian Response Plans where a country does not have the fiscal and technical capacity to respond to a crisis, the role of the donor community is clearly outlined in **Article 2.1**

"Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical, **to the maximum of its available resources**, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognised in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures"

**Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2023, by members of the Development Assistance Committee (preliminary data)**



Sources: OECD (2024), Flows by donor (ODA+OOF+Private).[DAC1]  
 Note: Green bars represent providers that met or exceeded the UN target of 0.7% ODA/GNI in 2023. (Left-hand chart): ODA on a grant equivalent measure by members of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as percent of gross national income (GNI). (Right-hand chart): ODA on a grant equivalent measure by members of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).



<https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/official-development-assistance.htm>

Article 2.1 does not just recognises the international obligation to provide financial and technical assistance to less developed countries, it goes some way to quantifying this obligations with the wording **“to the maximum of its available resources.”**

In 1970 developed countries committed to give .7% of GNI/GDP to developing countries within 5 years. Over half a decade on we are struggling to maintain Overseas Development Aid at .37%. At the same time there is a growing sense of donor fatigue as the escalating humanitarian needs continue to rise. Within such an environment there is a significant power imbalance between the giver and receiver of aid.

The global narrative that developed countries can spend over 2000 billion dollars on defense each year (2.3% GNI) and struggle to find the 50 billion required to build long term sustainable resilience for the poorest 350 million people we share this planet with needs strategic refocusing.

Fiance needs a stronger and more distinct narrative that moves from moral duty towards legal obligation and strategic investment. Funding resilience building programs will not just reduce need but are the long term building blocks of peace.

## Conclusion

This submission framed itself around the most affected by food security and malnutrition by focusing on underfunded Humanitarian Response Plans. It linked these plans to the Inequalities report and the CFS Framework for Action in Crisis by highlighting the development and resilience building approach to humanitarian programming. We also included the accountability framework of SPHERE which is the comparable accountability framework to the CFS Framework in Crisis.

The submission centered its attention on finance as the main bottleneck for Humanitarian Development Programming in fragile settings. With a human rights based lens it touched on the power imbalance between donors and recipients of that aid.

We called for a stronger narrative around aid that moved from a moral to legal framework and from charity to investment.

We questioned donor fatigue within a space where developed countries are spending over 2000 billion dollars on military while Humanitarian Response Plans and are facing a funding deficit of 35 billion dollars in the coming year.

End

