‘There is a woman, a child, a man behind every statistic, and the numbers are very large.’

Former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos

Oxfam is one of the world’s leading providers of humanitarian aid in emergencies. In 2014–15, it supported more than 8 million people in crisis. Whenever and wherever there is a widespread threat to people’s life and security, Oxfam will respond where it believes it can make a positive difference. We deliver assistance (including, water, sanitation, emergency food security and livelihoods) and strive to ensure civilians are protected from violence. We campaign for the rights of those affected to be respected, their needs met, and for the reasons that they are in crisis in the first place to be addressed – as part of a rights-based approach to overcoming poverty, suffering and injustice.

Humanitarian Key Facts (to be updated on a regular basis) draws attention to the scale and impact of recent humanitarian crises, and the need for both greater assistance and lasting solutions to the millions of people affected by conflict, violence and disasters.
HUMANITARIAN NEED AND FINANCING

In July 2015, the UN estimated a record 82.5 million people will require humanitarian assistance this year. (Source: OCHA)

In 2014, international funding met only two-thirds of the requirements set out in UN humanitarian appeals. The $8.5bn shortfall meant humanitarian agencies could not provide sufficient support to some of the most vulnerable men, women and children in the world. (Source: OCHA)

In 2013, the total shortfall in UN humanitarian appeals could have been filled by less than 1 hour of OECD countries’ combined GDP, less than 1 day of Fortune 500 companies’ combined profits, and less than the retail value of two weeks of US food waste (Source: Oxfam)

In 2013, the world spent 80 times as much on military expenditure as on humanitarian aid. (Source: Oxfam)
CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

• In 2014, 3,419 people drowned trying to cross the Mediterranean. (Source: UNHCR) In the first four months of 2015, 2,629 people died trying to reach Europe this way. (Source: IOM)

• In the first half of 2015, 77,100 people arrived in Greece by sea, 60 percent of them from Syria. (Source: UNHCR) By July 2015, Syria’s conflict had driven half the population to flee their homes. According to UNHCR, 4 million people had fled to neighbouring countries. Another 7.6 million were displaced within Syria, the highest number of internally displaced people anywhere in the world. (Source: NRC)

• According to UNHCR, 25,000 Rohingya and Bangladeshis boarded smugglers’ boats on the Bay of Bengal between January and March this year, and 300 people died at sea in that period as a result of starvation, dehydration and abuse by boat crews.

• Across the Gulf of Aden, more Africans died in 2014 – 233 – seeking to reach Yemen than in the previous three years combined, before this year’s escalation of conflict in Yemen forced many Somalis to make the hazardous journey back home (Source: IOM).

• Around the world, 59.5 million people were displaced at the end of 2014 – more than 8 million more than in 2013, and 22 million more than a decade ago. (Source: UNHCR)

• On an average day in 2014, 42,500 people a day fled from violence, persecution and conflict – four times the same figure four years ago. (Source: UNHCR)

• In 2014, 26 percent of refugees were hosted by countries in Asia, 26 percent in Africa, 21 percent in the Middle East, 22 percent in Europe and 3 percent in North America. (Source: UNHCR)
• The soaring number of people forced to flee their homes is driven by, among other things, the highest number of major civil wars since 1992. From 2007 to 2014, the number of active civil wars grew from four to 11. (Source: UCDP/PRIO)

• South Sudan is just one example of a new conflict – active since December 2013 – as well as of the global scourge of sexual violence as a method of warfare. 40 percent of all South Sudanese women have been subject to physical and sexual violence. (Source: Relief Web)
• The number of disasters resulting from natural hazards has doubled in the past 25 years, and 93 percent of deaths from disasters have occurred in developing countries. (Source: ODI)

• In 2013, 22 million people were displaced by disasters caused by natural hazards in 2013 (Source: NRC), and in 2012 98 percent of human displacement was triggered by climate- and weather-related hazards. (Source: NRC)

• Despite the huge human and financial cost of disasters, only 0.4 percent of official development assistance was spent on reducing the risk of disasters in the three decades to 2010. (Source: ODI)

• Long before the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal, the Nepal Red Cross estimated that for every $1 spent to reduce the risk of disasters, almost $4 would be saved in future disaster response. (Source: Mercy Corps/Red Cross)

• According to the World Bank, improved early warning systems of natural disasters in developing countries could yield benefits four to 36 times greater than the cost. (Source: World Bank)