



Dignity in Action: Global Overview 2023/2024

November 2025



When it comes to putting affected people at the centre of our work, cash assistance is a critical tool because it puts financial resources in the hands of crisis-affected people so that they can recover, whenever and however they choose. In so doing, it enables affected people to make their own decisions – decisions which may well be different from those a humanitarian organisation would make on their behalf. CVA has the potential to be transformative because it starts to change the balance of power between humanitarian agencies and crisis-affected people, as well as the multiple other stakeholders involved in humanitarian responses: donors, governments and civil society."

—
Jo Burton, Head of Economic Security Unit,
International Committee of the Red Cross



As the Movement expands its footprint in utilising cash assistance, we must ensure that communities are at the heart of every intervention, shaping the design so assistance reflects their priorities and unique needs. Investing in National Societies as local actors in cash preparedness is not just about building systems; it's about strengthening trust and resilience at the community level. This is how we deliver dignity, choice, and impact."

—
Joseph Oliveros, Global Cash Lead, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Tracking cash assistance

Table 1: Key features of cash assistance delivered by the Movement in 2023 and 2024

	2023	2024	
	Number of CVA¹ recipients	12.3 M	11.4 M
	Total cva delivered (chf)	895.6 M	888.5 M
	Countries and regions²	90	103
	% of total CVA in the form of cash transfers	97%	88%
	% of total CVA provided as vouchers	3%	12%
	Delivery via a framework agreement (multi product and/or multi programme) with financial service providers	90%	N/A
	% of total CVA provided via electronic delivery mechanisms	98.5%	98%
	% of CVA with community engagement and accountability mechanisms	94%	89%

¹ Cash and voucher assistance

² Most Movement Counting Cash data is reported at a country level, with some reported by offices working regionally.

The [Counting Cash initiative](#) tracks the total cash assistance delivered each year by all parts of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, from individual National Societies to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Counting Cash provides a comprehensive mechanism for National Societies to monitor their own cash activities and those of their sister National Societies on regional and global scales. The initiative helps position the Movement as a first-choice partner in cash assistance, demonstrating its global reach. It also enables the Movement to identify and monitor trends and growth over time, informing strategic decision-making, and is a helpful tool to identify where National Societies might need further support.

Counting Cash data has been collected since 2017 and is aggregated and visualised in the Movement's [Cash Maps](#).



Section 1

Scale and coverage of cash assistance

Global trends

In 2023 the Movement distributed around 896 million CHF to over 12 million people globally; and in 2024 almost 889 million CHF to 11.4 million people. This equated to 13 per cent of total global humanitarian cash in 2023, and 12 per cent in 2024. This continues a trend of incremental reductions in the Movement's proportion of global cash across the sector year-on-year since 2018, but nevertheless continues to demonstrate the Movement's status as one of the leaders in humanitarian cash assistance.³ It is also important to note the full scale of cash distributed by the Movement is likely to be underreported, as a large number of National Societies deliver cash funded by the United Nations, which is not captured within the Movement's cash footprint.

There was relative stability in the total volume of CHF delivered by the Movement across 2023 and 2024. The amount delivered in 2023 fell markedly – by 13 per cent – compared to the all-time high achieved in 2022, which had been largely driven by a peak in responses to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine crisis. This aligns with the global trend across the sector, where the volume of humanitarian cash delivered also dropped for the first time in 2023 from a peak in 2022, although the global drop was less marked at 7 per cent. However, the volume of Movement cash then performed much better than the global trend in 2024: while Movement cash decreased by only 0.8 per cent compared to 2023, the global volume fell by 15 per cent.⁴

The Movement has distributed cash assistance in humanitarian responses in well over 100 countries and territories to date. The number fluctuates from year to year in line with needs and available resources. It dropped by 10 per cent in 2023 – even as recipient numbers rose – and increased to over 100 countries and regions in 2024. The growth in the number of countries where Movement cash assistance has been delivered since 2018 has been enabled by National Societies investing in their organisational and operational cash preparedness. 131 countries have either engaged in cash preparedness or developed plans to do so.⁵

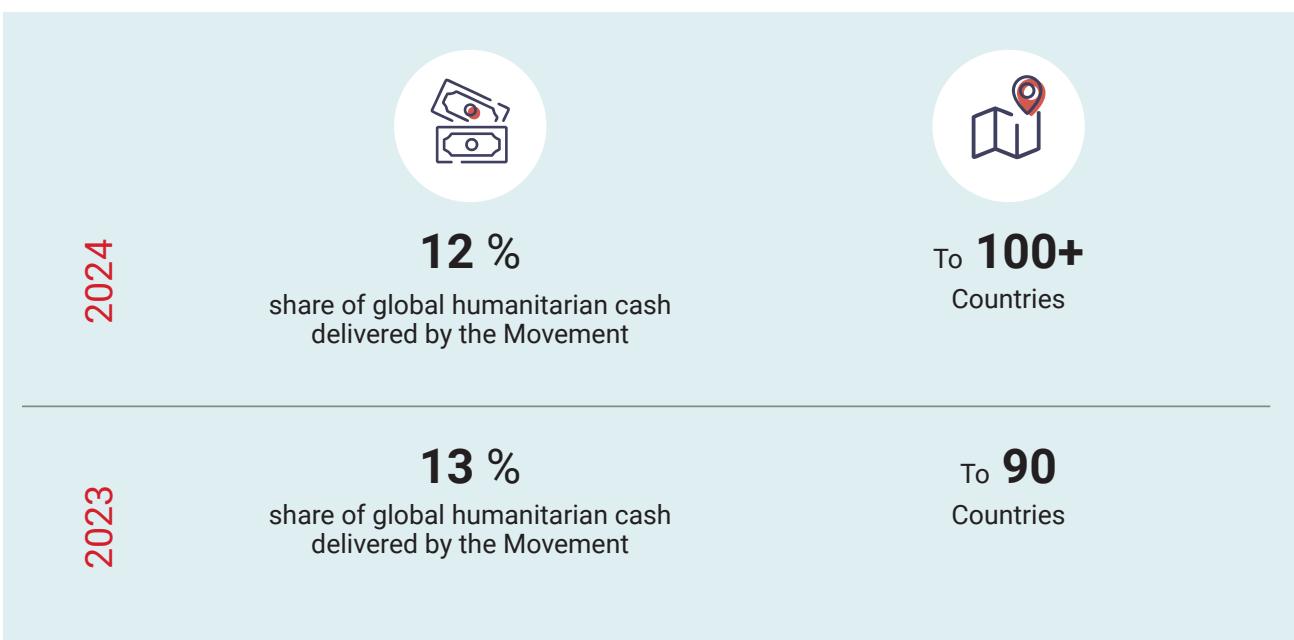


Table 2: Counting Cash by year 2017 to 2024

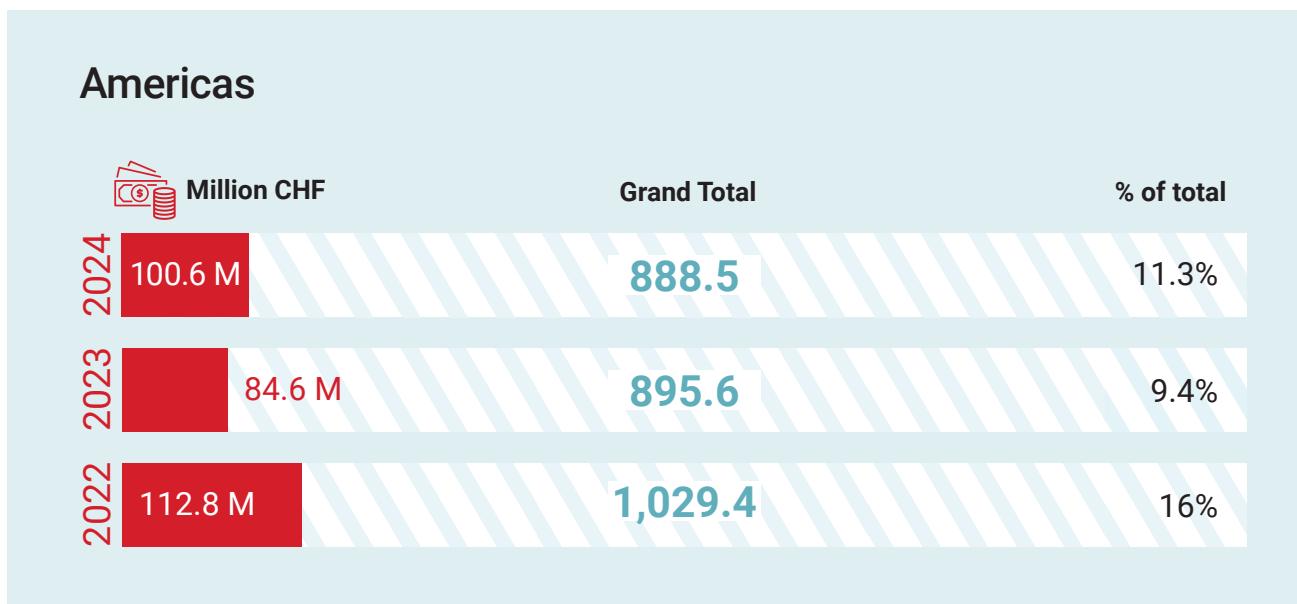
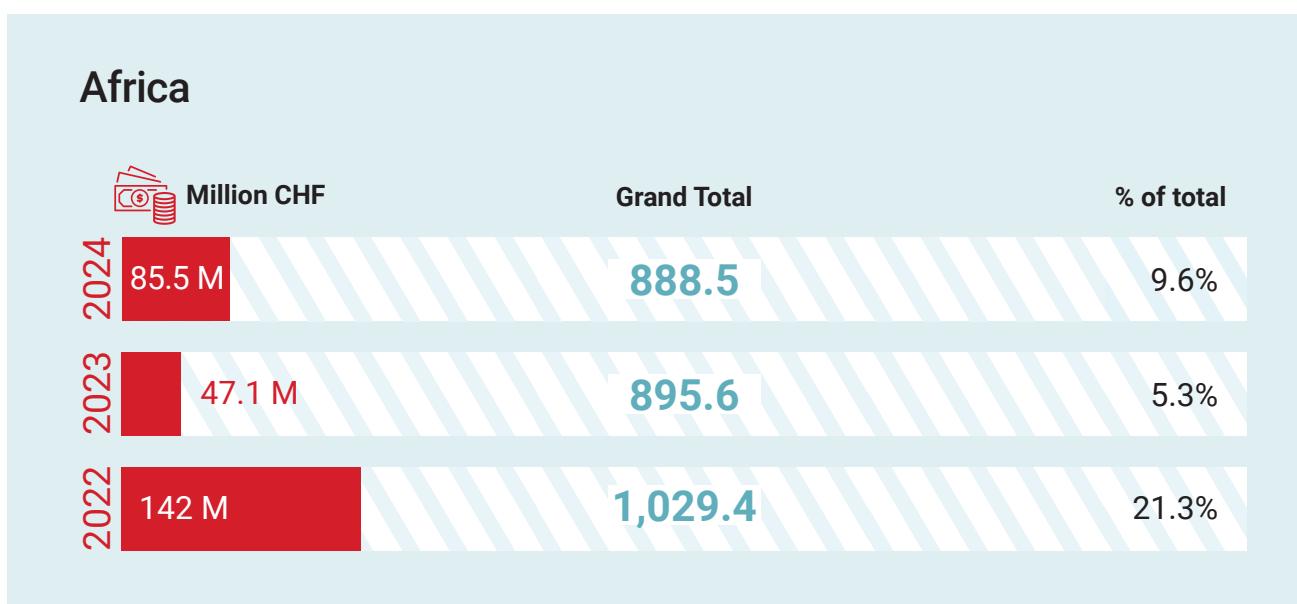
	# of people	# countries	Cash expended CHF
2024	11.4 M 	103 	 888.5 M
2023	12.3 M 	90 	 895.6 M
2022	10.4 M 	100 	 1,029.4 M
2021	7.5 M 	94 	 916.7 M
2020	10.2 M 	115 	 867.3 M
2019	6.5 M 	93 	 842.8 M
2018	3.6 M 	56 	 782.3 M
2017	5.6 M 	83 	 767.1 M

³ See [Global Humanitarian Assistance 2025](#), ALNAP, June 2025, pp.29-31⁴ Ibid.⁵ As of June 2025, according to a [mapping conducted by the IFRC](#).

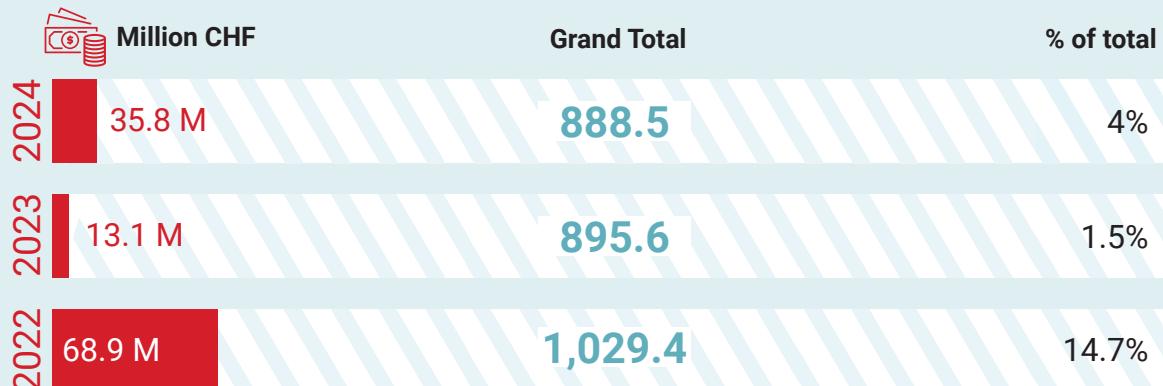
Regional trends

The Europe region, which includes Türkiye and Ukraine, has consistently been the biggest region for Movement cash assistance, comprising some three quarters (just under 75 per cent) of the total in 2023. While Europe still accounted for almost 64 per cent of Movement cash in 2024, the drop of 106.2 million CHF from 2023 was significant. Meanwhile there was marked growth in cash assistance delivered in Africa in 2024, up by 81 per cent on the previous year's volume, and in the Asia Pacific region where the volume of cash assistance was nearly three times larger than in 2023. There was also growth from 2023 to 2024 in the Middle East and North Africa (27 per cent), and in the Americas (19 per cent).

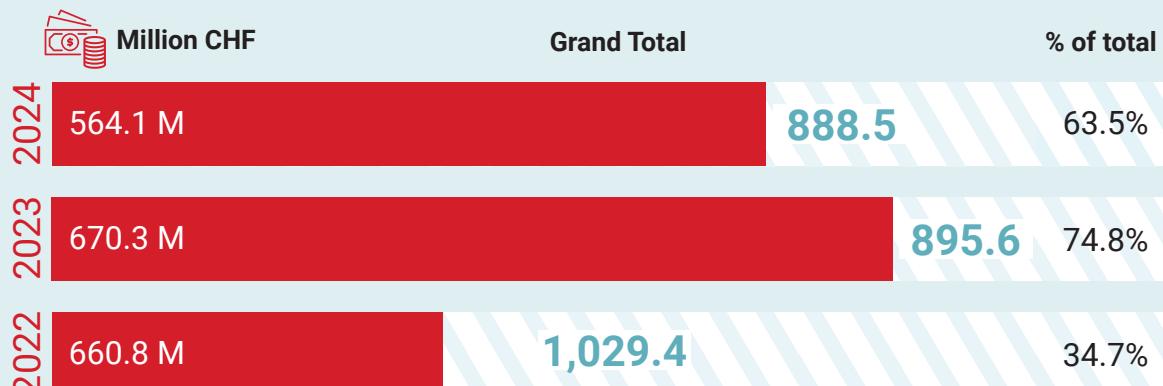
Table 3: Total cash assistance delivered per region



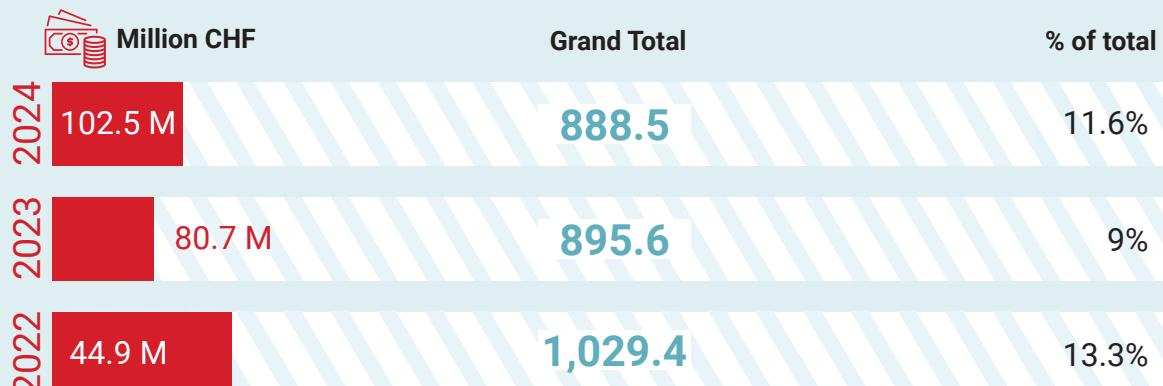
Asia Pacific



Europe



MENA

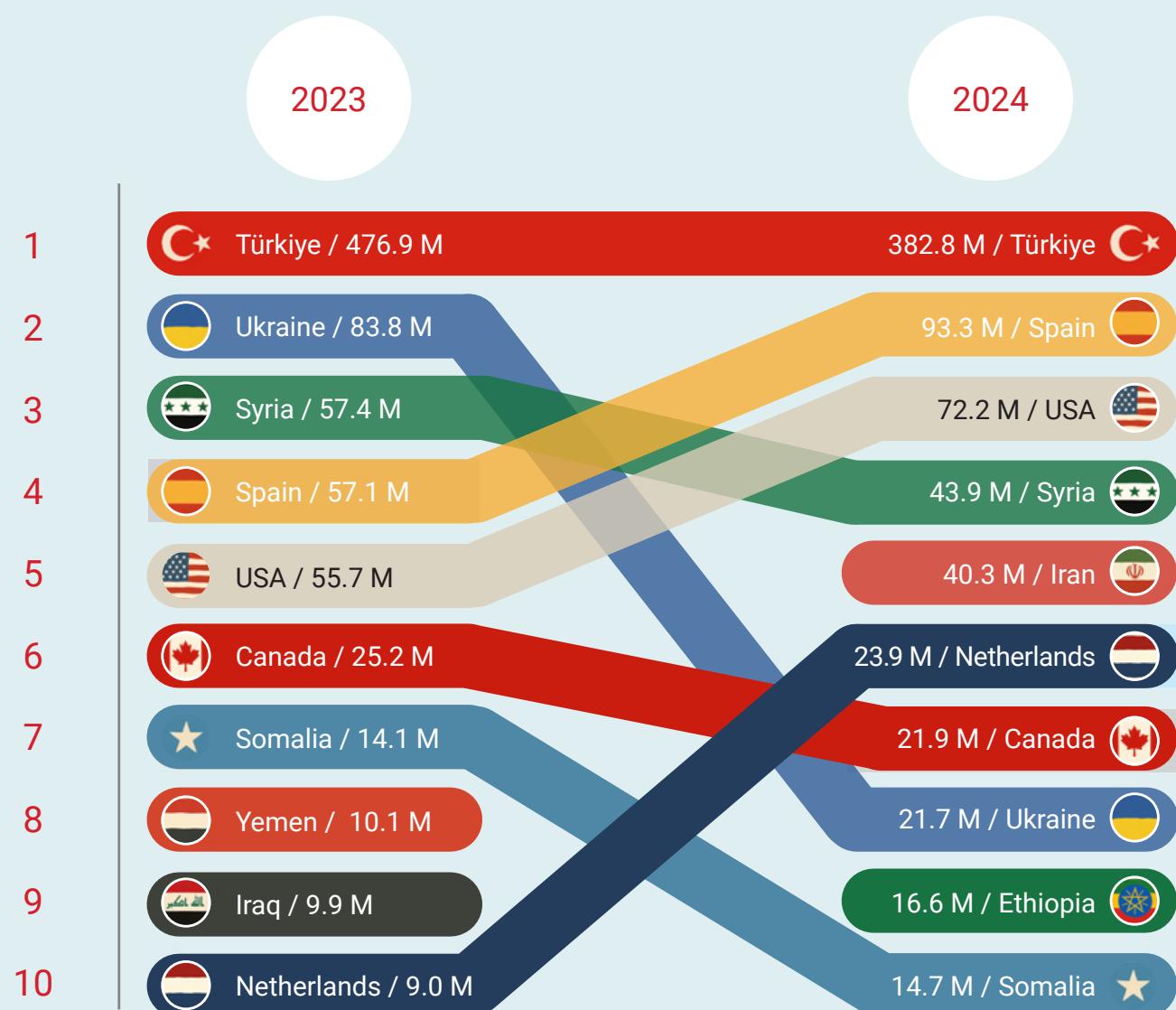


Cash assistance by country

In 2023 and in 2024 the largest country-level volume of cash assistance – by some distance – continued to be delivered in Türkiye by the Turkish Red Crescent. This included social assistance to vulnerable migrants and emergency cash assistance to people affected by the powerful earthquakes in February 2023. Cash assistance to Ukrainians inside Ukraine and in neighbouring countries peaked in 2023, and then dropped in 2024. Cash delivered inside Ukraine was just under 10 per cent of all Movement cash assistance in 2023, but reduced by 75 per cent in 2024. Cash assistance to neighbouring countries affected by the Ukraine crisis was 3 per cent of all Movement assistance in 2023, and then reduced by 65 per cent in 2024.⁷

Protracted crisis contexts, in particular in Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, Yemen and Ethiopia, saw some of the Movement's largest volumes of cash assistance in both 2023 and 2024. There were also consistently large domestic cash assistance programmes delivered by National Societies in comparatively peaceful and prosperous contexts in 2023 and 2024, in particular in Spain, the United States of America, the Netherlands and Canada.

Table 4: Countries which delivered the largest amounts of cash assistance (CHF million).



Recipients of cash assistance

Table 5: Total recipients of Movement cash assistance per region



Differences in the value of cash assistance provided in different contexts mean that the numbers of recipients per region differ in some respects from the volumes of cash delivered. A majority of recipients were in Europe in both 2023 and 2024. Just over one sixth of cash recipients were in Africa in 2023; this doubled to just under a third in 2024. The proportion of cash recipients in the Middle East and North Africa remained steady at around 11 per cent in both 2023 and 2024. In Asia Pacific the number of recipients in 2024 was slightly more than double the number in 2023. In the Americas, the number of Movement cash recipients fell by 41 per cent in 2024 compared to 2023, while the volume of cash distributed increased, indicating an increase in the average amount of cash transferred to recipients.

Objectives of cash assistance

A large majority of the assistance provided was supporting people to meet their basic / essential needs by providing them with multipurpose cash assistance: this accounted for 85 per cent of cash delivered in 2023, and 91 per cent in 2024.⁸

The remaining cash assistance was designed and delivered for a range of sectoral outcomes. Livelihoods and food security remained priorities in 2023 and 2024. Support for shelter, housing and settlements made up just under 10 per cent in 2023, but much less in 2024, and support for health and care outcomes grew in 2024.

Table 6: Countries distributing the largest amounts of CVA per region

	MENA			Europe		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
1	Lebanon 	Syria 	Syria 	Türkiye 	Türkiye 	Türkiye 
2	Jordan 	Yemen 	Iran 	Ukraine 	Ukraine 	Spain 
3	Yemen 	Iraq 	Yemen 	Poland 	Spain 	Netherlands 
4	Iraq 	Lebanon 	Iraq 	Romania 	Netherlands 	Ukraine 
5	Syria 	Egypt 	Lebanon 	Kazakhstan 	Poland 	Israel 

Americas

2022 2023 2024

1	USA 	USA 	USA 
2	Canada 	Canada 	Canada 
3	Colombia 	El Salvador 	Colombia 
4	Honduras 	Colombia 	El Salvador 
5	St Vincent and the Grenadines 	Ecuador 	Honduras 

Africa

2022 2023 2024

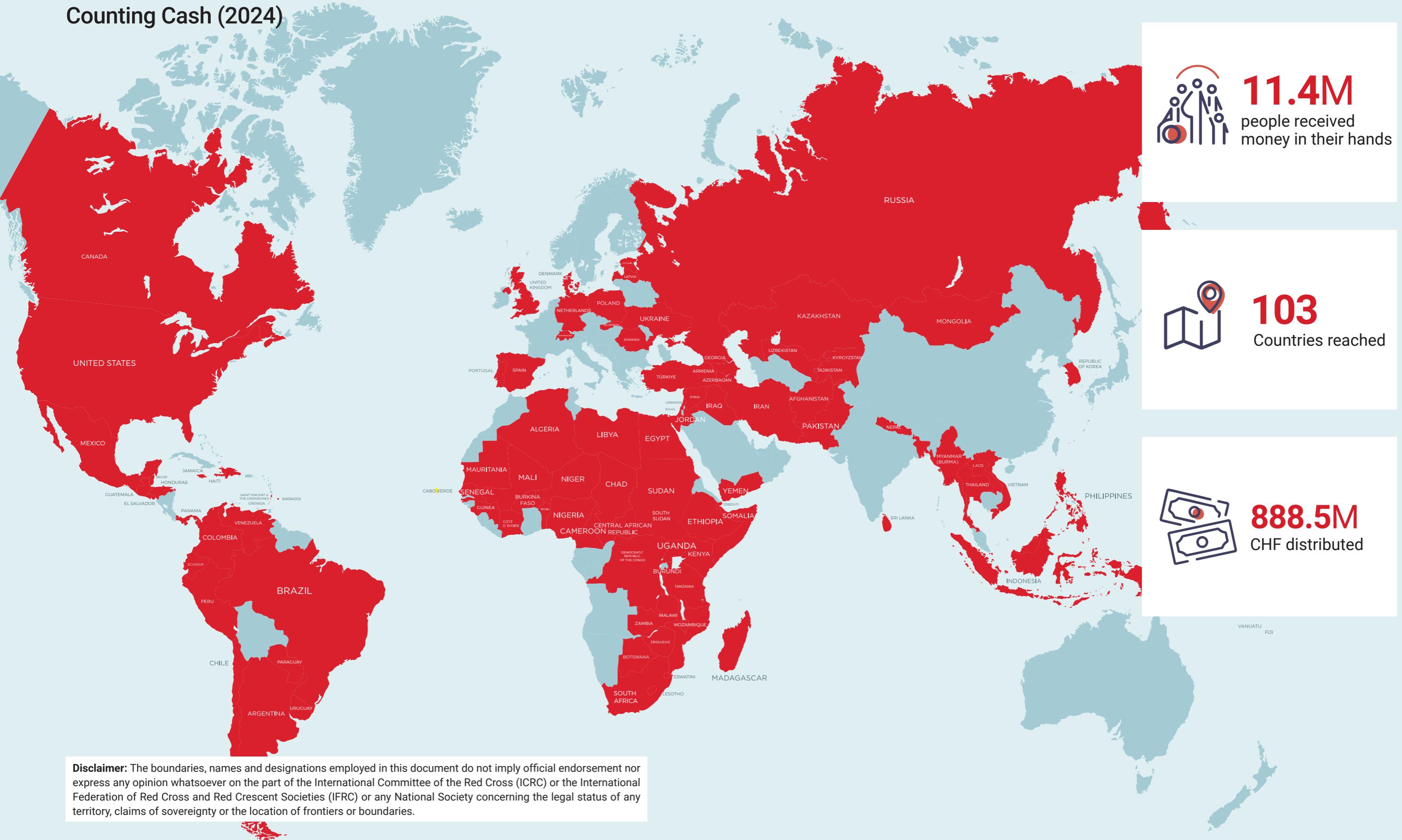
Kenya 	Somalia 	Ethiopia 
Somalia 	Ethiopia 	Somalia 
Burundi 	Niger 	Sudan 
Madagascar 	Mali 	Nigeria 
Egypt 	Kenya 	South Sudan 

Asia Pacific

2022 2023 2024

Malaysia 	Afghanistan 	Mongolia 
Australia 	Philippines 	Afghanistan 
Republic of Korea 	Nepal 	Bangladesh 
Afghanistan 	Myanmar 	Republic of Korea 
Bangladesh 	Indonesia 	Nepal 

Counting Cash (2024)



Section 3

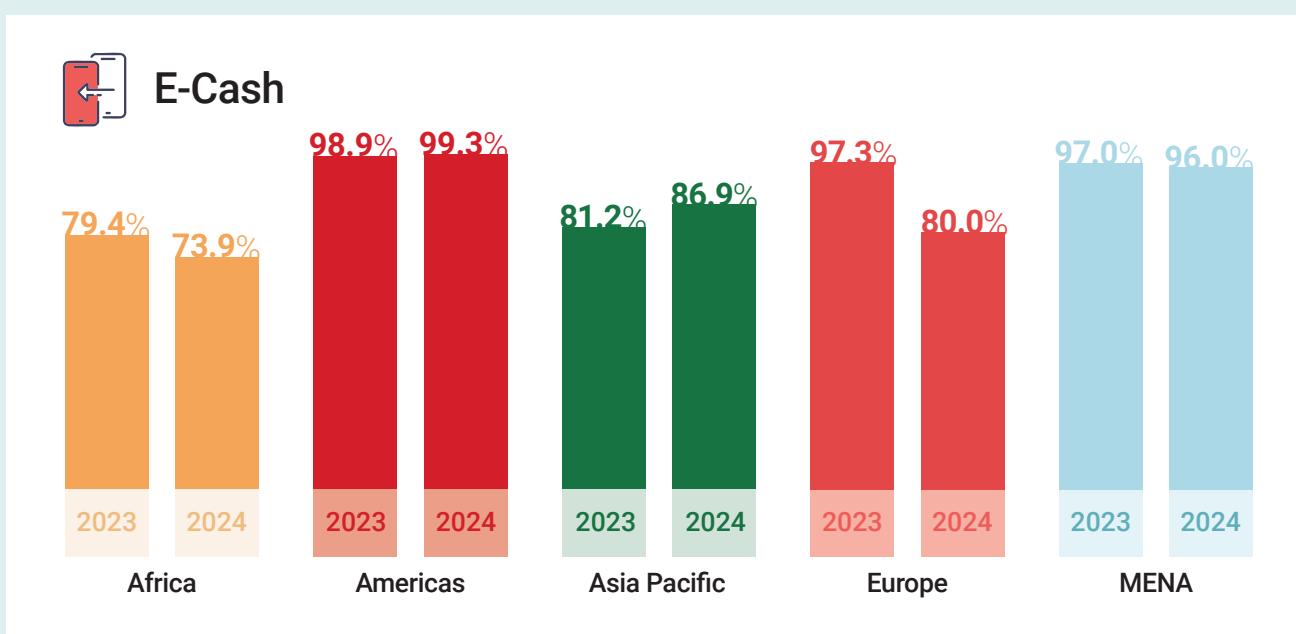
Quality of cash assistance

Delivery mechanisms

The Movement continued to promote the electronic delivery of cash assistance. In both 2023 and 2024 some 98 per cent of cash was delivered using electronic mechanisms, including bank account transfers, ATM/prepaid cards, mobile money, electronic vouchers, remittance companies and agent networks. This was a 3 per cent increase on 2022.⁹ This upward trend highlights the growing value the Movement places on electronic delivery mechanisms and the continued importance for National Societies to invest in robust digital payments, systems and platforms as part of their cash preparedness.

In the Americas and the Middle East and North Africa, the vast majority of assistance was delivered as cash and using electronic transfer mechanisms, in alignment with sector-wide standards and best practice. In Europe electronic delivery of cash assistance was almost total; 97 per cent was delivered as electronic cash in 2023, while in 2024 one fifth was via electronic vouchers. In Asia Pacific there was a reduction in the use of cash in envelopes in 2024, and a rise in providing paper vouchers and using electronic transfer mechanisms. In Africa, 91 per cent of CVA was delivered using electronic mechanisms in 2023. In 2024 this fell to 77 per cent, and there was a rise in the use of cash in envelopes, driven by contextual needs including coverage and availability of financial service providers in rural and remote areas.¹⁰

Table 7: Cash assistance by delivery mechanism and region¹¹



⁹ To provide a more accurate figure, these and other percentages in this report are calculated as a proportion of all Counting Cash reports which included reporting for that particular indicator, rather than as a proportion of the entire Counting Cash dataset for that year. For delivery mechanism/modality, the reporting rate was 91 per cent of the total for 2023, and 86 per cent for 2024.

¹⁰ For example in responses in South Sudan, Madagascar, Malawi and Mali, which were the highest users of cash in envelopes in Africa in 2024.

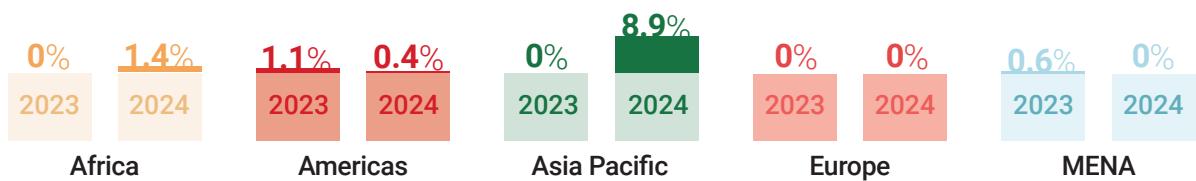
¹¹ This data relates to National Society CVA delivery in 2023 and 2024; ICRC data on delivery mechanisms was not available at the country/delegation level.



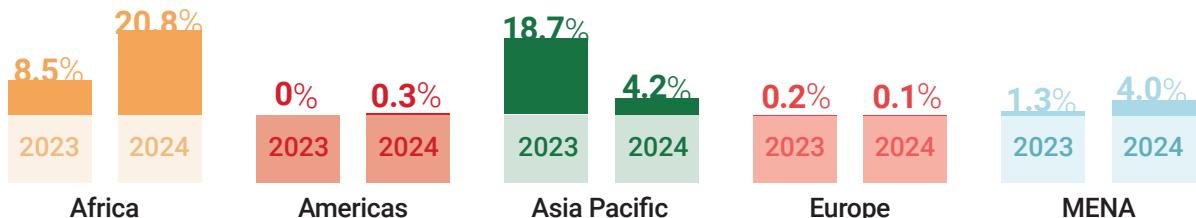
E-Vouchers



Paper vouchers



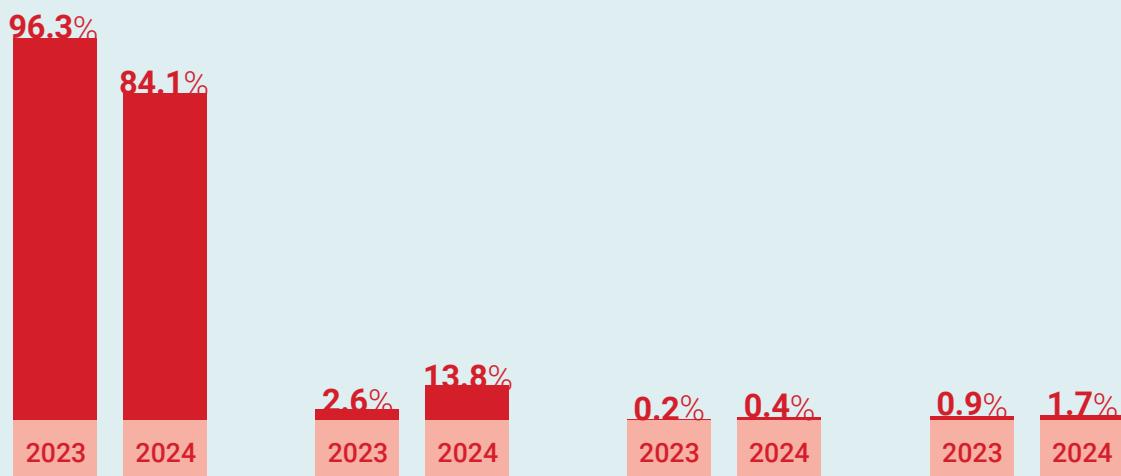
Cash in envelopes



Cash vs vouchers

In 2023, 97 per cent of all Movement CVA was delivered as cash, and 3 per cent as vouchers.¹² This was unchanged from 2022.¹³ In 2024 there was a shift: 88 per cent of Movement CVA was delivered as cash, and 12 per cent as vouchers. Vouchers were delivered in 24 of the 103 countries (23 per cent) where Movement cash assistance reached people in need in 2024; this was up from 15 out of 90 countries (17 per cent) in 2023.

Table 8: Percentage of Movement cash assistance per delivery mechanism



E-Cash



E-Vouchers



Paper
vouchers



Cash in
envelopes

¹² 0.5 per cent of Movement CVA reports in 2023 did not include modality.

¹³ In 2022, 97 per cent of the Movement's CVA was delivered as cash assistance.

The ICRC's cash and voucher assistance

The ICRC's CVA was consistently predominantly delivered as cash: 97.3 per cent of it was delivered as cash in 2023, and 99.4 per cent in 2024. The volume of cash delivered by the ICRC reduced by 21 per cent in 2024 as compared to 2023. This was mostly due to the 2023–2024 budget cuts within the ICRC; however, this reduction affected all modalities, and the ratio of cash assistance to other modalities stayed the same.

For the ICRC, the reduction in the volume of assistance delivered using vouchers was proportionally much greater, falling by 84 per cent in 2024 as compared to the previous year. This reduction remained driven by contextual and needs-based analysis. Moreover, vouchers represent only a very small percentage of the ICRC's cash budget.

Decisions on delivery modalities continued to be made at the country level. For example, in Sudan the ICRC shifted a big part of its portfolio from in-kind assistance to cash in 2024 due to market functionality, recipient preferences, as well as challenges in maintaining a pipeline for in-kind goods. Meanwhile in some countries in West Africa the ICRC had to resort to in-kind assistance instead of cash due to restrictions placed on cash by authorities, while continuing to advocate for cash assistance when possible.

Reasons for the use of vouchers

For many National Societies, vouchers represent an important first step in building cash capacity. Vouchers can be an entry point for a National Society to invest in cash assistance, and a key building block in facilitating a shift to delivering cash assistance as experience and capacity develops. Contextual and organisational factors may also mean that conditions or restrictions need to be placed on assistance, and in such contexts, it may be necessary to use vouchers rather than cash.

The increase in the use of vouchers in 2024 was not uniform across countries and contexts. The rise was driven by a small number of National Societies with large voucher programmes, including in particular the Spanish Red Cross, whose e-voucher assistance accounted for 10 per cent of all Movement cash in 2024, and 86 per cent of all vouchers delivered that year. Other significant voucher-based assistance in 2024 was delivered as e-vouchers by the Netherlands Red Cross, Danish Red Cross and Burkinabe Red Cross, while in Afghanistan over 85,000 people received paper vouchers.

Contextual factors and constraints drove requirements to use vouchers. For example, the government banned humanitarian cash transfers in Burkina Faso from late 2022.¹⁴ In Europe, where there was an increase of 17.4 per cent in voucher delivery in 2024, government and donor preference was cited as a core reason driving National Societies' use of vouchers, for example in the Netherlands.

Early action with anticipatory cash assistance

Anticipatory cash assistance – which seeks to reduce the negative impact of disasters by providing assistance to populations before a forecasted disaster occurs – is on the rise. The number of sudden onset and approved Early Action Protocols¹⁵ including cash assistance grew steadily in 2023, and by 2024 had doubled compared to 2022, appearing in 20 per cent of all Movement cash assistance projects reported for that year. This mirrors sector-wide findings and analysis for anticipatory action, which have documented cash-based actions as those most frequently listed in anticipatory frameworks and used in real-time activations for both 2023 and 2024. There was a notable increase in cash-based actions in 2024 compared to 2023.¹⁶

At the regional level, in 2024 just under half of all Movement anticipatory cash assistance was delivered in Africa, and just over a quarter in the Middle East and North Africa. The five countries which saw most anticipatory cash delivery were Syria, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Korea and Chad.

¹⁴ As of November 2025, this ban remained in place.

¹⁵ Early Action Protocols (EAPs) are formal plans produced by National Societies. They outline the early actions that will be taken when a specific hazard is forecasted to impact communities, and provide pre-approved funding for up to five years.

¹⁶ See the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Anticipation Hub's [Anticipatory Action in 2023: A Global Overview and Anticipatory Action in 2024: A Global Overview](#). In 2023 cash-based actions were listed in 83 frameworks and used in 49 activations; in 2024 this increased to 113 frameworks and 72 activations.

Table 9: Projects reporting anticipatory cash assistance, 2022 to 2024

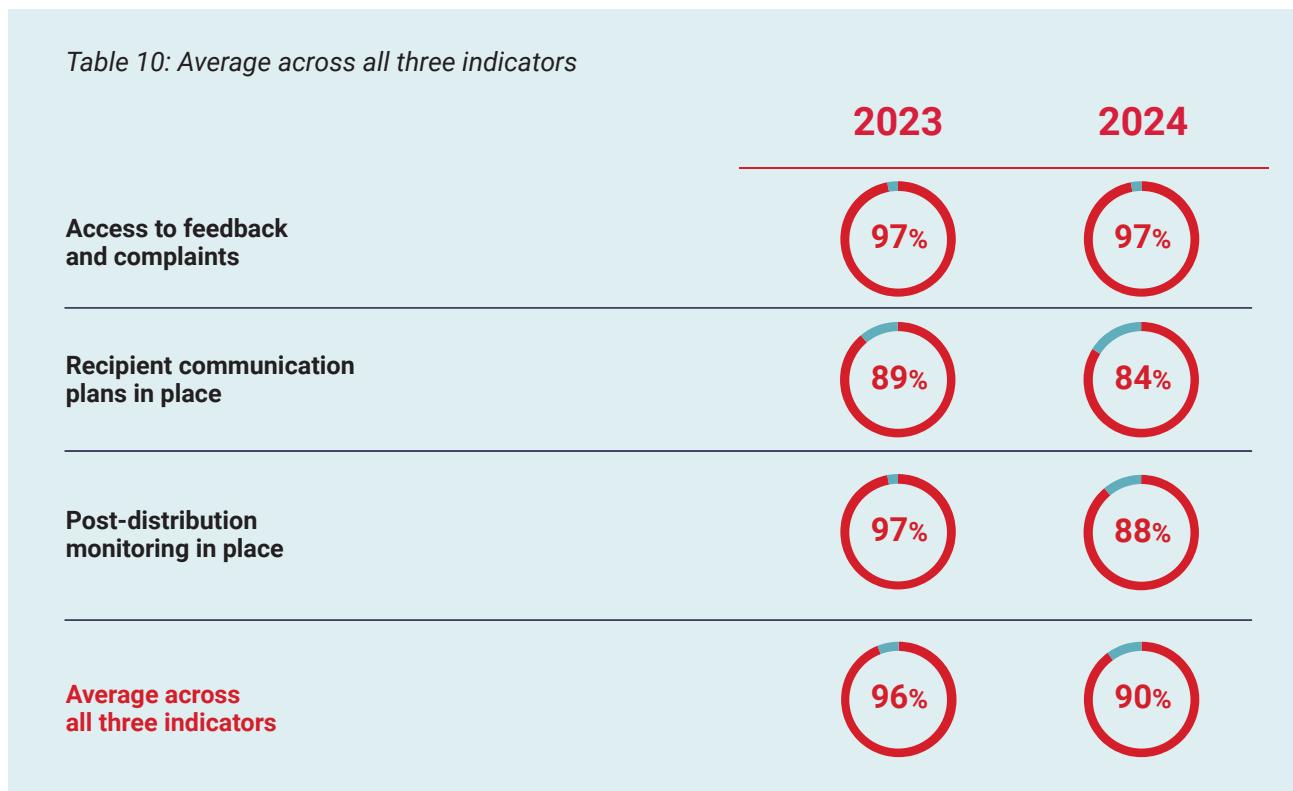


Accountability and capacity

Integrating community engagement and accountability (CEA) approaches in cash assistance remains a priority across the Movement. In 2023 and 2024, 97 per cent of programmes with cash had a feedback and complaints mechanism for recipients. In 2023, 94 per cent of Movement cash had key CEA mechanisms, (averaged across the three key indicators shown in Table 9); in 2024, 90 per cent did.¹⁷ Continued investment in CEA mechanisms and in leveraging community voice should be prioritised across Movement programmes.

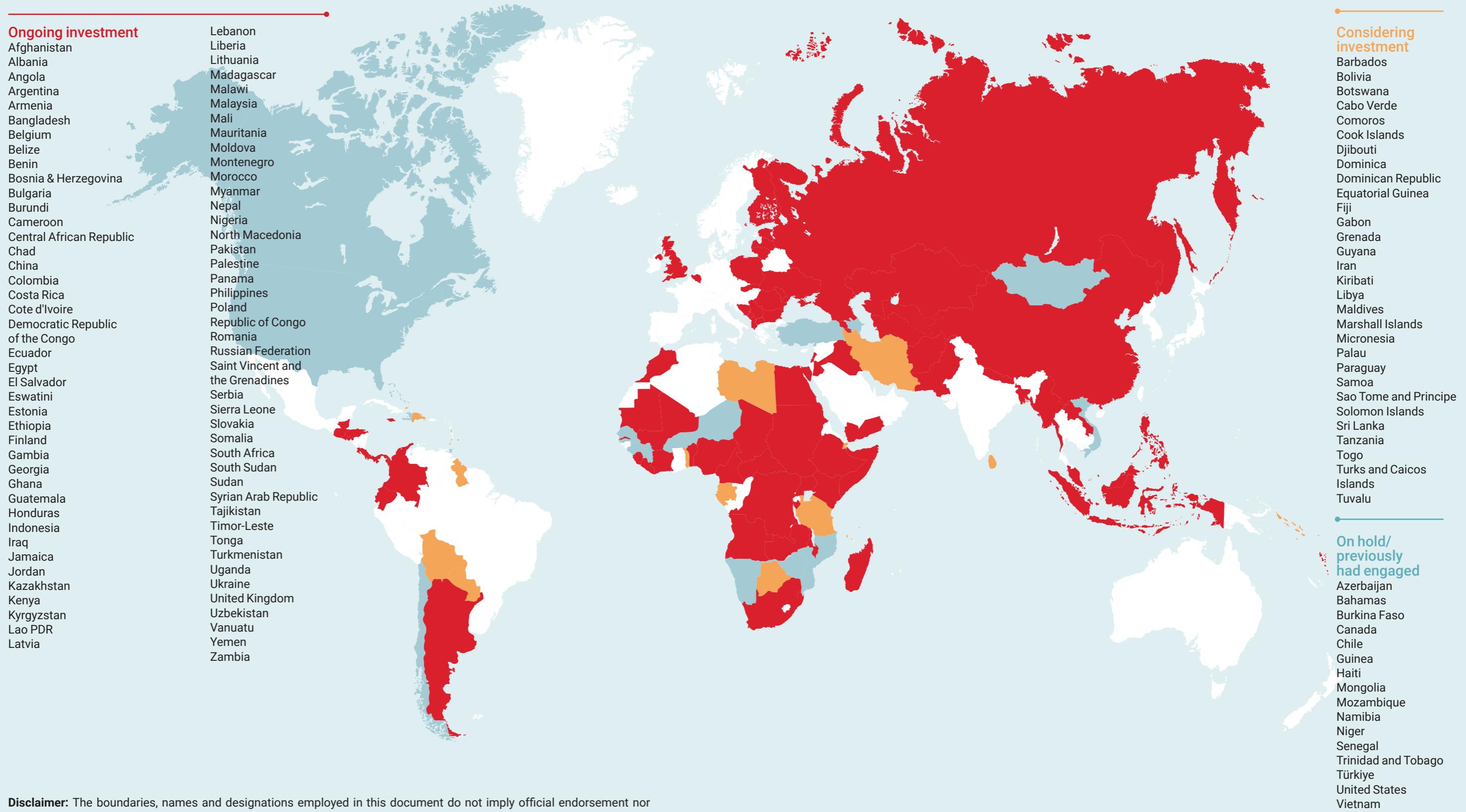
In 2023, 90 per cent of Movement cash assistance was delivered using a framework agreement with a financial service provider, up from 82 per cent in 2022, demonstrating continued progress to strengthen operational capacity in line with organisational investments in cash preparedness. Comparable data on this indicator was not available for 2024.

Table 10: Average across all three indicators



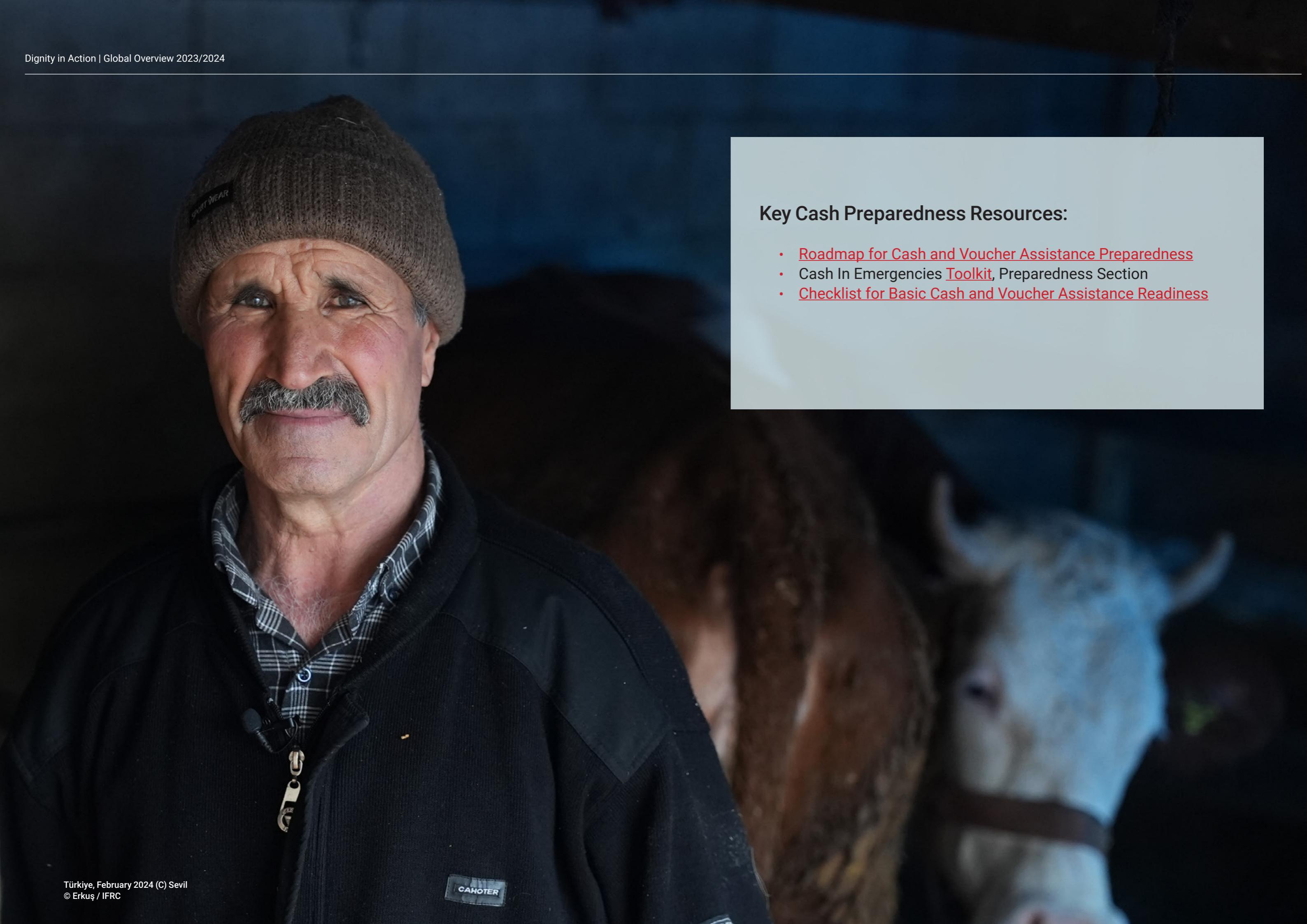


Movement Cash Preparedness



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Figure 2: National Societies investing in cash preparedness activities (as of June 2025)



Key Cash Preparedness Resources:

- [Roadmap for Cash and Voucher Assistance Preparedness](#)
- Cash In Emergencies [Toolkit](#), Preparedness Section
- [Checklist for Basic Cash and Voucher Assistance Readiness](#)

