

WHO seeks \$1.5 bn for urgent health aid in 2024

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The UN health agency on Monday said it needed \$1.5 billion in 2024 for life-saving aid to tens of millions of people trapped in health emergencies, including in Ukraine and Gaza.

The World Health Organization warned that nearly 300 million people across the globe were expected to require humanitarian assistance and

protection this year.

Among them, "an estimated 166 million people will need life-saving humanitarian [health](#) assistance," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a launch event in Geneva.

He said his agency was aiming to reach around 87 million of those most in need, and would require \$1.5 billion to do so.

"As 2024 starts, WHO is already responding to 41 health crises, including 15 of the highest-level emergencies," he said.

Those caught up in such crises, he warned, are facing a "traumatic start to a new year, and it comes on the back of 2023, which was itself a year of immense and mostly avoidable suffering".

Listing a long line of conflicts, from Ukraine to Sudan to Gaza, he said that "shockingly, one child in every five globally either lived in or fled from a conflict zone in 2023".

Tedros also highlighted the worsening climate crisis, with last year determined to have been the hottest in [human history](#).

This, he warned, had "grave implications for health", from "catastrophic hunger" sparked by [drought](#) in the Horn of Africa, to deadly disease outbreaks spurred on by changing climate patterns.

Tedros stressed that "for those facing emergencies, disruptions to essential health services often mean the difference between life and death".

In 2023, funding appeals to provide health aid in different settings received on average just 12 percent of the requested funds, he said.

"This is heartbreaking, and it is avoidable," Tedros said. "It is why in 2024 we must step up."

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