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Special Fund for Emergency and Resilience Activities (SFERA)

Annual report 2024



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Executive summary

The Special Fund for Emergency and Resilience Activities (SFERA) enables the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to take rapid and effective action in response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies.

Effective January 2025, the fund has been renamed the “Special Fund for Emergency and Resilience Activities”, replacing the previous name “Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities”. This change reflects the FAO emergency and resilience programme, which supports resilient agrifood systems, moving beyond short-term rehabilitation efforts. It highlights the Organization’s commitment to the Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus, promoting a cost-effective and proactive approach that integrates emergency response with development strategies. By prioritizing resilience building, FAO aims to empower vulnerable communities to better anticipate, absorb and recover from shocks while fostering sustainable development.

From its inception in 2004 through 31 December 2024, SFERA has received USD 463.5 million.

Under the programme component:

- USD 169.8 million were allocated to large-scale programmes (e.g. locust, sudden-onset disasters, El Niño, highly pathogenic avian influenza or regional protracted crises);
- USD 132 million were disbursed under the Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) window; and
- USD 49.4 million under the Anticipatory Action (AA) window.

Under the revolving fund:

- USD 40.2 million were used to set up or reinforce Country Office emergency response capacities and support needs assessments and programme formulation; and
- USD 28.8 million were allocated to the Level 3 (scale up) emergency preparedness and response window.

Since SFERA’s inception, under its working capital component, USD 646.2 million have been advanced to fund immediate emergency projects, of which USD 39 million were advanced over the reporting period. Outstanding advances as of 31 December 2024 amounted to USD 16.7 million.

SFERA’s cash balance as of 31 December 2024 was USD 26.5 million.



Background

During its Hundred and Second Session in May 2003, the Finance Committee supported the creation of the Special Fund for Emergency and Resilience Activities (SFERA), with the purpose of enabling the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to rapidly initiate emergency operations by participating in interagency needs assessment and coordination activities, establishing an emergency coordination unit, preparing a programme framework and projects, and providing advance funding for procurement of inputs when a resource partner's commitment has been obtained.¹

This annual report provides a brief description of the major operations initiated with SFERA allocations for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2024. The report contains financial data for this period, as well as data since the Fund became operational. A summary table of receipts, advances, applications and balance is available in **Annex 1**.



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¹ FC 102/14.

SFERA set-up

SFERA has three components:

- **a working capital component** to advance funds once a resource partner's commitment is secured toward the immediate procurement of inputs to protect livelihoods, restart agricultural activities or contribute to an immediate response to a crisis;
- **a revolving fund component** to support FAO's involvement in needs assessment, programme development, early establishment and reinforcement of emergency country team capacities, Level 3 (scale-up) emergency² preparedness and response activities; and
- **a programme component** to support work on specific large-scale emergency programmes, or strategically complement ongoing programmes through the Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) window, as well as the Anticipatory Action (AA) window triggered by corporate early warnings.

Table 1. SFERA components and windows

Working capital component	Revolving fund component	Programme component
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advances to enable rapid response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency coordination and response capacity window• Needs assessment and programme development window• Level 3 (scale-up) emergency preparedness and response window	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large-scale programme window (e.g. sudden-onset disasters, El Niño, highly pathogenic avian influenza or regional protracted crises)• AIRC window• AA window• Centrality of Protection and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) window

The **working capital component** reduces the reaction time to emergencies by enabling FAO to initiate activities and procure the most critical assets before funding from resource partners is received. By enabling a rapid response, this component helps to mitigate the impact of threats and emergencies and accelerates the recovery of those affected.

The **revolving fund component** supports the efforts of FAO's emergency country teams to identify the most critical needs of affected populations, strengthen response capacity, and develop and coordinate technically sound response programmes. Through the Level 3 emergency preparedness and response window, FAO can prepare for and respond to the extraordinary challenges facing the agriculture sector during a Level 3 (scale-up) emergency.

The **programme component** facilitates faster and more programmatic assistance that can be tailored to evolving needs on the ground. SFERA's pooled funding approach provides the flexibility to adjust activities and support according to the geographical and thematic areas of greatest need.

Likewise, the programme approach enables operations to adapt as the situation changes, streamlining activities to ensure the most appropriate assistance reaches affected populations sooner. The programme component also includes the AIRC window that channels pooled funds towards the immediate procurement and delivery of time-critical inputs. With the AA window, FAO is enabled to act early once an impending threat has been identified, before disaster losses are sustained in the agriculture sector or livelihoods compromised. Ultimately, the Centrality of Protection and PSEA window aims at strengthening the Organization's capacities in terms of protection, accountability to affected people and PSEA.

² Sudden-onset, large-scale disasters and crises that require a corporate response.

SFERA resources

Receipts – Since SFERA’s inception in April 2004, the Fund has received a total of USD 463.5 million. Of this amount, USD 343 million were provided by the Members listed in **Table 2**, including USD 9.5 million provided by resource partners that transferred the balances of closed emergency projects to SFERA. During the period of January–December 2024, deposits to SFERA amounted to USD 31.8 million.

In view of the growing number of crises, the resources received in 2023 were critical for the effective functioning of the working capital fund enabling a quick and at-scale response, including semi-earmarked and unearmarked contributions. Additional efforts are required to reach a target balance of USD 100 million, which would ensure a fully flexible and efficient SFERA, providing the tool to cope with three simultaneous large-scale crises.



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Table 2. SFERA funding receipts

Contributors	Since inception (USD 000)	January–December 2024 (USD 000)
Australia	218	0
Austria	1 131	0
Belgium	84 972	5 411
Canada	13 963	45
Chile	5	0
China	500	0
Czechia	36	0
Finland	3 747	0
France	9 812	178
Germany	21 771	6 779
Greece	227	0
Holy See	30	0
Ireland	7 424	0
Italy	1 490	0
Japan	430	0
Jordan	60	0
Kuwait	50	0
Lao People's Democratic Republic	14	0
Luxembourg	8	0
Malta	124	81
Monaco	59	0
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	9 681	0
New Zealand	13	0
Norway	82 353	7 188
Pakistan	1	1
Portugal	202	52
Republic of Korea	76	0
Saudi Arabia	1 377	0
Slovenia	107	0
South Africa	452	0
Spain	520	0
Sweden	51 463	4 348
Switzerland	4 942	0
United Arab Emirates	12	12
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	45 780	7 675
Others (less than 5 000)	44	0
Total from Members	343 094	31 771
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	10 000	0
Direct operating cost recovery	107 948	12 000
Louis Dreyfus Foundation	327	0
Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries	481	0
Total United Nations entities	1 674	35
Grand total received	463 524	31 806

Notes: as of 31 December 2024. United Nations entities refers to: the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the World Bank and the World Food Programme.

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Use of SFERA funds

Under the working capital component, USD 646.2 million was advanced to projects after resource partners' commitment, but before receiving the cash contributions. Of this amount, USD 16.7 million remain outstanding, pending receipt of resource partner funds.

Of the USD 463.5 million contributed, USD 69.1 million were approved under the revolving fund component. A total of USD 351.2 million was allocated under the programme component, of which USD 169.8 million were disbursed under the thematic and regional window. SFERA's cash balance as of 31 December 2024 was USD 26.5 million. The use of funds is detailed in **Table 3**.

Table 3. SFERA funding components, advances, applications and balance since inception and for the reporting period of January–December 2024

Component	Since inception (USD 000)	January–December 2024 (USD 000)
Advances		
Working capital component		
Total advances made during the period	646 219	39 044
Refunds on advances paid during the period	629 519	25 359
Outstanding advances	16 700	
Applications		
Revolving fund component		
Emergency coordination unit setup and reinforcement	21 240	50
Needs assessment and programme development missions	19 002	581
Level 3 emergency preparedness and response	28 847	0
Total revolving fund component	69 089	631
Programme component		
AIRC window	132 031	13 611
AA window	49 366	12 442
Thematic and regional window		
Desert locust campaign	51 105	0
Highly pathogenic avian influenza campaign	45 928	0
Typhoon and hurricane	15 598	324
Horn of Africa (regional programmes)	13 748	0
El Niño	12 227	7 675
Protracted crisis	11 110	6 324
Tsunami campaign	10 002	0
The Sahel (regional programmes)	3 552	0
COVID-19	2 934	0
Centrality of Protection and PSEA	1 438	638
Initiative on soaring food crisis	1 168	0
Fall armyworm	1 001	0
Subtotal thematic and regional window	169 811	14 961
Total programme component	351 208	41 014
Grand total applications	420 297	41 645
SFERA balance	26 526	

Note: as of 31 December 2024 – Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Working capital component

Advances – During the reporting period, 85 percent of SFERA advances were in support of projects funded by Germany, OCHA and the United States of America as shown in **Table 4**.

Table 4. SFERA advances by resource partners for the reporting period

Resource partner	Advances (USD 000)	Refunds (USD 000)
Austria	0	750
Belgium	1 615	1 615
European Commission	300	0
Germany	9 991	9 991
Norway	400	400
OCHA	5 120	5 000
United Arab Emirates	3 322	3 322
United States of America	18 297	4 282
Total	39 044	25 359

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

From 1 January to 31 December 2024, over 92 percent of all advances were allocated to major programmes in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan** and various global projects, as detailed in **Table 5**. A short description of the main advances is provided in **Annex 2**.

Table 5. SFERA advances for country programmes for the reporting period

Country/region	Advances (USD 000)	Refunds (USD 000)
Colombia	380	380
Democratic Republic of the Congo	3 600	300
Ethiopia	3 282	3 282
Global	9 941	9 991
Madagascar	400	400
Malawi	0	500
Mozambique	320	820
Philippines	1 020	900
Somalia	8 000	0
Sudan	11 186	7 421
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	310	310
Regional – Africa	300	0
Regional – Asia and Pacific	305	305
Subregional – West Africa	0	750
Total	39 044	25 359

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.



Revolving fund component

Under the revolving fund component, the **emergency coordination window** facilitates the rapid deployment of emergency experts, as well as the reinforcement of the existing teams to support additional activities or fill short-term funding gaps while the **needs assessment and programme development window** finances needs assessment and programme support activities at the onset of a crisis to support FAO and its partners in formulating rapid response programmes as well as longer-term resilience strategies.

Under the **emergency coordination window**, SFERA-allocated funds supported FAO's emergency response and resilience-building activities across multiple regions. The allocations enabled the deployment of technical experts and emergency coordinators, strengthening operational and programmatic capacities. These efforts included strengthening cluster coordination, reinforcing cash and voucher assistance and improving compliance and monitoring frameworks. In addition, targeted support was provided to facilitate trainings, ensure operational continuity and provide surge support in response to evolving humanitarian needs. This funding has played a pivotal role in ensuring a timely, effective and well-coordinated response to multiple food security crises globally. **Table 6** shows the allocation of resources by country.

Table 6. SFERA emergency coordination allocations for the reporting period

Country/region	Approved allocation (USD 000)
Afghanistan	20
Afghanistan and Myanmar	69
Afghanistan, Nigeria, Sudan and Ukraine	100
Bangladesh	34
Burkina Faso	105
Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal	100
Burundi	100
Burundi and Haiti	100
Central African Republic	60
Chad	125
Chad and Southern Africa	100
Colombia, Haiti and Panama	37
Côte d'Ivoire	2
Democratic Republic of the Congo	72
Ethiopia	160
Kenya	59
Kosovo	150
Mozambique	67
Niger	85
Somalia	9
South Africa	100
South Sudan	256
Sudan	90
Syrian Arab Republic	99
Yemen	11
Regional – Asia and the Pacific (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Viet Nam)	100
Subregional – Caribbean (Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)	60
Subregional – Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda)	368
Regional – Latin America and the Caribbean (Plurinational State of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru)	50

Country/region	Approved allocation (USD 000)
Regional – Near East and North Africa, and Europe and Central Asia (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Serbia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Türkiye, Ukraine, West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Yemen)	368
Subregional – Western Africa (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone)	50
Total	2 938

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Under the **needs assessment and programme development window**, SFERA allocations played a critical role in supporting various assessments and programmatic planning efforts across multiple countries. Funds were utilized to support food security cluster coordination, conduct impact assessments on climatic shocks, and evaluate the effects of multiple disasters on agriculture and food security. For example, allocations supported assessments related to tropical cyclone impacts in **Madagascar**, El Niño impact and needs assessment in **Malawi**, crop and food security assessment in **Lebanon**, and interagency food security assessments in the **West Bank and Gaza Strip**, among others. These efforts were instrumental in guiding evidence-based programming and policy decisions to quickly address emerging challenges.

Moreover, funds under the needs assessment and programme development window, enabled FAO to conduct **Data in Emergencies (DIEM)** surveys in several countries, providing critical data to inform targeted interventions in fragile contexts. The funds supported capacity-building efforts, stakeholder coordination and technical missions to enhance data collection and analysis. **Table 7** shows the allocation of resources by country.

Table 7. Needs assessment and programme development allocations for the reporting period

Country	Approved allocation (USD 000)
Afghanistan	100
Armenia	60
Bangladesh	3
Brazil	25
Burkina Faso	182
Cameroon	79
Central African Republic	99
Chad	197
Colombia and Haiti	17
Democratic Republic of the Congo	100
Djibouti	15
Ethiopia	10
Ghana	50
Haiti	150
Honduras	39
Kenya	12
Kenya and Panama	9
Lebanon	174
Liberia	40
Madagascar	41
Malawi	60
Mali	100
Mozambique	104
Myanmar	78
Nepal	80
Niger	84

Country	Approved allocation (USD 000)
Nigeria	284
Pakistan	9
Senegal	20
Somalia	100
South Africa	10
South Sudan	129
Sudan	195
Syrian Arab Republic	51
Trinidad and Tobago	39
Viet Nam	21
West Bank and Gaza Strip	140
Yemen	100
Total	3 006

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

The **Level 3 emergency preparedness and response window** focuses on:

- preparedness measures and activities strengthening FAO's capacity to respond to large scale emergencies; and
- Level 3 emergency response and corporate surge.

Under **preparedness measures**, the Organization introduced an **internal surge mechanism**, specifically designed to address temporary human resource gaps in countries facing Level 3 emergencies through the deployment of internal personnel. The mechanism is now operational, with calls for expressions of interest issued to facilitate the identification of potential candidates for surge deployment. The Internal Surge Team is actively engaging with Country Offices to identify staffing shortages and encourage the use of this mechanism to promptly address critical staffing gaps, thereby ensuring operational continuity and enhancing internal mobility.

Efforts to **enhance Country Office capacities** encompassed a variety of initiatives including:

- developing human resources and travel procedures and processes for countries in the Near East region;
- conducting a Food Security Cluster Coordinators training in Kenya, organized by the Global Food Security Cluster, which equipped 24 coordinators with essential technical skills;
- providing regional trainings on supply chain management and logistics;
- delivering an emergencies and resilience programme design workshop to align strategies and improve the technical quality of emergency and resilience programming by addressing emerging trends and scaling up effective approaches; and
- offering multiple sessions of rapid response preparedness.

On **Centrality of Protection and PSEA**, FAO published its new policy providing a strengthened framework for the Organization's approach to addressing sexual exploitation and abuse and ensuring FAO is in line with recent developments and best practices on PSEA by the United Nations and Inter-Agency Standing Committee. In particular, the updated policy reflects the commitment to ensuring a victim/survivor-centred approach and strengthening PSEA compliance with FAO's partners. To bolster Country Office capacities, various support, guidance and capacity development initiatives were implemented to raise in-country awareness and strengthen PSEA measures. A blended four-week training was launched, attended by over 40 PSEA Focal Points and national PSEA Specialists. Additionally, PSEA sessions for over 40 FAO Representatives were conducted and PSEA awareness-raising sessions reached more than 2 500 FAO personnel.

Funds allocated under the **Corporate surge and Level 3 emergency response** support FAO's immediate response actions on a 'no-regrets' basis. During the reporting period, resources were approved for emergency response activities in **Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Mali** and **Yemen**. A short description of the use of funds is provided in **Annex 3**.

Table 8. Corporate surge and Level 3 emergency response allotments for the reporting period

Country	Approved allocation (USD 000)
Burkina Faso	500
Central African Republic	500
Mali	500
Yemen	500
Total	2 000

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.



Programme component

Under the SFERA programme component, USD 351 million have been allocated since inception, including USD 132 million under the AIRC window, USD 49.4 million under the AA window and USD 170 million to thematic or regional crises. Since 2023, resources are also mobilized under the **Centrality of Protection and PSEA window**, which aims at strengthening the Organization's capacities in terms of protection, accountability to affected people and PSEA.

Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity window

As shown in **Table 9**, USD 14.1 million were allocated under the AIRC window. These contributions enabled FAO to respond quickly to large-scale crises through the immediate procurement and delivery of time-critical inputs. A short description of the main activities implemented through the SFERA AIRC funds is provided in **Annex 4**.

Table 9. Allocations under the AIRC window for the reporting period

Country	Type of intervention	USD (000)
Allocations from Belgium		
Bangladesh	Emergency support to protect food security and livelihoods in areas affected by cyclone Remal	850
Cameroon	Emergency support to combat the food security crisis	500
Chad	Integrated livestock management to combat acute malnutrition in children under 5 years of age	500
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Support for the restoration of household livelihoods affected by acute food insecurity in Djugu territory, Ituri province	500
Ethiopia	Emergency agricultural support to drought-affected people in Tigray region	500
Malawi	Responding to the impacts of El Niño on the agriculture sector through cash transfers	500
Mozambique	Emergency assistance to vulnerable smallholder households affected by El Niño-induced drought in Manica	500
Nicaragua	Emergency response to enable food security and livelihoods recovery for smallholder farmers affected by El Niño	500
Niger	Rapid response for the restoration of livelihoods of households affected by flooding in Diffa, Tahoua and Zinder regions	650
Ukraine	Emergency livelihoods assistance to protect the food production of rural households in war-affected areas	900
Zambia	Mitigating the impacts of El Niño and climate extremes on agriculture and food security	400
Total Belgium		6 300

Allocations from Norway		
Afghanistan	Mitigating the impact of Moroccan locust on the most vulnerable rural households in the north and northeast of Afghanistan	1 000
Cameroon	Emergency response to flooding and scaling up of community-based AA in Far North region	250
Central African Republic	Emergency assistance to vulnerable populations affected by internal conflict	1 200
Chad	Emergency support for the restoration of agropastoral livelihoods to strengthen the resilience of households affected by floods	350
Myanmar	Life-saving emergency livelihoods support to conflict-affected farmers	1 000
Nigeria	Emergency food security and livelihoods support in response to flooding	500
Total Norway		4300

Country	Type of intervention	USD (000)
Allocations from Sweden		
Niger	Improving food security and resilience of communities in Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Tillabéri regions	1 750
Somalia	Recovery assistance to rural flood-affected agropastoralists and riverine communities	1 750
Total Sweden		3 500
Total		14 100

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Anticipatory Action window

The SFERA AA window plays an instrumental role in supporting FAO's global efforts in scaling up AA approaches to prevent food crises. FAO's AA aims to protect agricultural assets and livelihoods from the impact of hazards in order to prevent the adoption of negative coping mechanisms. The SFERA AA window enables Country Offices to access pre-allocated financing necessary for the timely implementation of AA interventions. It releases funds upon accurate early warning signals of an impending disaster, also called triggers. The trigger mechanisms are adapted to the context and priority hazards. They are based on quantitative thresholds and corroborated with qualitative information and expert judgement.

As shown in **Table 10**, USD 12.8 million were allocated under the AA window. A short description of the main activities implemented through the SFERA AA funds is provided in **Annex 5**.

Table 10. Allocations under the AA window for the reporting period

Country/region	Type of intervention	USD (000)
Allocations from Germany		
Cambodia	Protecting vulnerable farmers, livestock owners and fishers from El Niño-induced drought	500
Mozambique	Anticipating the impacts of La Niña-induced floods to protect the livelihoods of smallholder farmers	800
Philippines	Anticipatory actions to safeguard the food security and livelihoods of farmers and fishers during floods in Mindanao and the typhoon in the eastern seaboard	429
Global – Colombia, Malawi, Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda	Anticipating the impacts of La Niña-induced hazards to protect agricultural livelihoods and food security of vulnerable rural populations	6 779
Total Germany		8 508

Allocations from Belgium		
Colombia	Anticipatory actions to protect agropastoral livelihoods from the impact of La Niña	600
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Anticipatory actions to mitigate the impact of La Niña on agricultural livelihoods	500
Regional – Asia and the Pacific	Anticipatory actions to mitigate the impacts of La Niña ahead of floods and cyclones	500
Total Belgium		1 600

Allocations from Norway		
Madagascar	Anticipatory actions to prevent the escalation of a Malagasy migratory locust outbreak	500
Somalia	La Niña-related early warning, preparedness and response activities in drought hotspot	1 000
Total Norway		1 500

Country/region	Type of intervention	USD (000)
Allocation from Sweden		
Afghanistan	Tackling ongoing drought and scaling up anticipatory action efforts	848
Total Sweden		848
Allocation from multi-donors		
Mongolia	Anticipatory actions ahead of escalating <i>dzud</i> situation	282
Total multi-donors		282
Allocation from the World Food Programme		
Mozambique	Anticipatory actions to mitigate the impacts of La Niña	35
Total World Food Programme		35
Total		12 772

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Centrality of Protection and PSEA window

As shown in **Table 11**, USD 638 000 were received to strengthen FAO Country Office capacities in Protection and PSEA. A short description of the main activities implemented through this window is provided in **Annex 6**.

Table 11. Allocation under the Centrality of Protection and PSEA window for the reporting period

Country/region	Type of intervention	USD (000)
Allocation from Norway		
Global	Strengthening PSEA in FAO's emergency and resilience programmes in target countries	638
Total		638

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.



Protracted Crisis window

In the context of supporting the Organization's goal of reaching 80 million people annually, three allotments were made to support country programmes in Myanmar, Nigeria and the Sudan as these countries continued to face protracted food security challenges and underfunded humanitarian responses. As shown in **Table 12**, USD 6 million were allocated under the new window. A short description of the main activities implemented through this window is provided in **Annex 7**.

Table 12. Allocations under the Protracted Crisis window for the reporting period

Country	Type of intervention	USD (000)
Myanmar	Life-saving emergency livelihood assistance to vulnerable farmers and livestock owners in Kayin and southern Shan states	2 000
Nigeria	Emergency food security and nutrition intervention: empowering conflict-affected communities for resilience	2 000
Sudan	Restoring food security and nutrition of conflict-affected smallholder agropastoralist households in central, eastern and northern Sudan through provision of critical farming and pastoralist productive inputs	2 000
Total		6 000

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Climate Crisis (including El Niño and La Niña) window

Recognizing the immediate threats posed by climate change to agrifood systems, food security and livelihoods, this SFERA window is funding climate resilience activities to support urgent response and preparedness efforts. Through targeted interventions, FAO aimed to strengthen adaptive capacities, safeguard livelihoods and enhance the resilience of agrifood systems to mitigate the impacts of increasing environmental risks. As shown in **Table 13**, USD 7.6 million were allocated for this purpose. A short description of the main activities implemented is provided in **Annex 8**.

Table 13. Allocations under the Climate Crisis (including El Niño and La Niña) window for the reporting period

Country/region	Type of intervention	USD
Allocations from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland		
Afghanistan	Emergency assistance for flood-affected farming and livestock communities across northern, northeast and west regions	1 022 385
Niger	Improving the food security and resilience of communities in Diffa and Maradi regions	1 022 385
South Sudan	Supporting climate-resilient agricultural livelihoods	1 022 385
Regional – Dry corridor	Mitigating the impacts of El Niño and La Niña-induced climate extremes on agriculture and food security	2 841 229
Global	Assessments of El Niño impact on agricultural livelihoods and food security in priority countries	1 000 000
Global	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and FAO partnership for scaling up evidence-based climate action in crisis settings	255 596
Global	Anticipatory actions to strengthen community resilience in Diffa and Tahoua regions in preparation for a harsh pastoral lean season and the heightened risk of bushfires due to drought	511 192
Total		7 675 172

Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Conclusions

Over the past year, the number and size of humanitarian crises have increased, with community needs shifting rapidly and available resources becoming increasingly insufficient to meet all demands. Delays in responding to crises result in prolonged human suffering, and funding through fully earmarked contributions does not allow for agile and fast adaptation to evolving needs, reducing cost-effectiveness and efficiency in responding to humanitarian crises. The impact of delays in agriculture is long-lasting for affected populations and costly for the humanitarian community.

SFERA continues to provide FAO with a tool to improve timeliness, increase predictability and catalyse its response at the country level, thereby enhancing support to Members. Contributing to SFERA, including through semi- and unearmarked allocations, enables FAO to provide rapid, high-impact emergency assistance to the most vulnerable populations affected by various shocks, including protracted crises, natural disasters, and food chain crises.

SFERA positions the Organization to swiftly upscale its operational capacity when needs increase rapidly after a disaster. It enables FAO to quickly implement large-scale emergency programmes, strengthening local and national capacities to protect community households, ultimately safeguarding millions of rural and pastoral households from livelihood loss and distress. SFERA is critical in operationalizing cost-effective anticipatory action interventions. Evidence from the past years shows that for every US dollar FAO invested in anticipatory action, households experienced substantially higher returns in avoided losses and added benefits.

SFERA plays a crucial role in bolstering FAO's efforts to effectively prevent, mitigate and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse in all its emergency operations. Communities impacted by humanitarian emergencies are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse due to existing and exacerbated power imbalances. Implementing effective PSEA measures is essential to ensure impactful outcomes and a more protective and accountable environment for affected communities.

SFERA interventions identify and integrate the different needs and strengths of women, men, boys, and girls. Specific attention is given to supporting female-headed households in emergency response, disseminating technologies and practices that prevent and mitigate disaster impact, reducing women's work burden, promoting women's access to information and training, and increasing women's access to productive resources and assets.

Annex 1 – SFERA receipts, advances and applications – summary table

From its inception in 2004 through 31 December 2024, SFERA has received USD 463.5 million.

Under its **working capital component**, USD 646.2 million have been advanced to fund immediate emergency projects, of which USD 39 million were advanced over the reporting period. Outstanding advances as of 31 December 2024 amounted to USD 16.7 million.

Under the **revolving fund component**, USD 40.2 million were used to set up or reinforce Country Office emergency response capacities and support needs assessments and programme formulation, and USD 28.8 million were allocated to the Level 3 (scale up) emergency preparedness and response window.

Under the **programming component**, USD 132 million were disbursed under the AIRC window, USD 49.3 million under the AA window, and USD 169.8 million were allocated to thematic or regional programmes.

SFERA's cash balance as of 31 December 2024 was USD 26.5 million.

Component	Since inception (USD 000)	January–December 2024 (USD 000)
Receipts	463 524	31 806
Members	343 094	31 771
Others	120 430	35
Working capital component – outstanding advances	16 700	
Advances	646 219	39 044
Refunds	629 519	25 359
Revolving fund component	69 089	631
Emergency coordination unit setup and reinforcement	21 240	50
Needs assessment and programme development missions	19 002	581
Level 3 emergency preparedness and response	28 847	0
Programme component	351 208	
AIRC window	132 031	13 611
AA window	49 366	12 442
Thematic and regional window	169 811	14 961
SFERA balance	26 526	

Note: as of 31 December 2024 – Source: Authors' own elaboration, compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

Annex 2 – SFERA advances for country programmes in 2024

Summary of use

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Enabled the early and rapid initiation of several interventions aimed at enhancing the resilience of rural households affected by instability and livelihood losses in North Kivu and Ituri provinces, including displaced households. Advances facilitated the timely procurement of agricultural inputs, commencement of community sensitization efforts, and the establishment of agreements with financial service providers for the disbursement of cash transfers.

Ethiopia

Provided FAO with the flexibility to respond quickly to the needs of drought-affected communities. With immediate access to funds, FAO procured and delivered livestock feed to sustain core breeding and milking animals, ensuring continued milk production for vulnerable households. Cash transfers were also distributed to meet urgent needs. SFERA advances allowed FAO to act promptly, protecting pastoral livelihoods and mitigating the impact of the drought.

Somalia

Enabled FAO to respond promptly to the needs of flood-affected communities. The released funds supported the early procurement of agricultural inputs such as seeds and tools, alongside cash transfers for flood-affected households. The advances ensured that assistance reached vulnerable communities in time to protect and restore livelihoods, resume food production, and strengthen resilience against anticipated dry spells and future climate shocks.

Sudan

Allowed FAO to act swiftly, where recent events threatened the livelihoods and food security of agriculture- and livestock-dependent communities. By enabling the immediate procurement of essential agricultural inputs, such as seeds, and delivering emergency livestock protection through vaccinations and deworming, the advances ensured a timely response. This rapid action contributed to safeguarding food production and preventing further deterioration of food security and nutrition in the most affected regions.

Global

Advances allocated to AA initiatives ensured continuity of ongoing activities across multiple regions, strengthening risk analysis, early warning capacities and the implementation of timely actions to protect communities ahead of crises. The advances allowed the Organization to swiftly implement capacity-building activities targeting high-risk countries, enhancing preparedness and response capabilities. In response to predicted La Niña-induced hazards, the advances enabled FAO Country Offices in Africa, Asia and Latin America to carry out actions such as disseminating early warning messages, distributing agricultural inputs, providing veterinary services, repairing small water infrastructure and delivering cash assistance. These timely interventions helped safeguard livelihoods, ensuring that vulnerable populations could continue agricultural activities and maintain food security in the face of evolving climate risks.

Annex 3 – Corporate surge and Level 3 emergency response 2024 allocations

Summary of use

Burkina Faso

The evolving situation in Burkina Faso, combined with funding shortfalls, necessitated urgent action to strengthen FAO's ability to address the growing need for protecting rural livelihoods. The funding enabled FAO to maintain essential Country Office operations and implement emergency livelihoods interventions.

Central African Republic

Ongoing disruptions have impacted agricultural livelihoods and food systems, making it essential to sustain emergency livelihoods interventions. The funding allowed FAO to scale up its efforts to ensure the delivery of essential agricultural support and strengthen community resilience.

Mali

Contributed to sustaining FAO's ability to deliver timely support, including agricultural inputs, livelihoods restoration efforts and resilience-building activities.

Yemen

Supported the Food Security and Nutrition Information System, a critical mechanism for monitoring and analysing food security and nutrition trends. Amid ongoing challenges, the system provided early warnings, facilitated coordination among stakeholders, and guided food security and livelihoods interventions.

Annex 4 – Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity window 2024 allocations

Summary of interventions

Afghanistan	Strengthened locust surveillance and preparedness in northern Afghanistan to mitigate the threat of Moroccan locusts on livelihoods and food security. Activities included conducting surveys of egg-laying sites, assessing resource gaps and training local communities on locust control. Additionally, FAO provided emergency livestock protection support for vulnerable livestock-keeping households.
Bangladesh	In response to cyclone Remal and northeastern floods, the Organization provided emergency support to affected farming households to enable them to quickly restore their livelihoods. The assistance included the distribution of rice and vegetable seeds, fertilizers, tools and cash transfers. FAO's interventions targeted the most vulnerable communities, ensuring access to inputs for the upcoming planting seasons.
Cameroon	In the East region, where displacement and climatic shocks strained local resources and livelihoods, FAO provided agricultural inputs, livestock kits and established fodder fields to support vulnerable households. Beneficiaries were also trained on sustainable production techniques to improve productivity and safeguard livelihoods. In the Far North region, FAO responded to flooding by distributing agricultural inputs and providing cash transfers to affected households. Efforts also included strengthening local capacities through community-based flood mitigation measures and enhancing early warning systems.
Central African Republic	Supported vulnerable populations affected by instability through implementing cash-for-work interventions to rehabilitate agricultural land and small-scale irrigation infrastructure.
Chad	In Kanem and Barh-El-Ghazel, support for livestock-keeping households included livestock feed, milk management training and nutrition counselling. Moreover, in Tandjilé province, FAO responded to floods by distributing rice seeds and tools, and providing livestock vaccinations, deworming and cash assistance.
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Contributed to addressing the impacts of instability affecting rural livelihoods in Ituri province by providing farming households with short-cycle vegetable and staple crop seeds, tools and technical training.
Ethiopia	Assisted drought-affected households in Tigray region by providing locally adapted cereal and vegetable seeds for the <i>Meher</i> season along with training on climate-smart agricultural practices.

Malawi

Contributed to addressing the impacts of El Niño-induced dry spells through the implementation of emergency cash transfers targeting farming households in Machinga and Mangochi districts in the Southern Region. Beneficiaries were also trained on climate-smart agricultural practices and post-harvest management.

Mozambique

Supported drought-affected communities in Manica province by distributing agricultural input packages, including seeds and tools, to restore production for the main growing season. Livestock protection measures, such as vaccination campaigns and veterinary support, were also implemented to safeguard assets and strengthen resilience to El Niño-induced impacts.

Myanmar

Supported vulnerable farming households affected by instability and climate shocks through the provision of vegetables, maize and paddy seeds along with fertilizers, technical training on good agricultural practices and cash assistance.

Nicaragua

Contributed to addressing the impacts of El Niño by assisting smallholder farming households with seeds for staple crops and backyard gardens, fertilizers and training on climate-resilient agricultural practices.

Niger

In Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Tillabéri, targeted households received seeds, tools and cash assistance to restore production and enhance resilience to climate shocks. Separately, in response to flooding in Diffa, Tahoua and Zinder, FAO provided agricultural inputs kits, livestock restocking, veterinary services and emergency cash assistance to protect herds, enable off-season cultivation and assist flood-affected households in rebuilding their livelihoods.

Nigeria

Following floods in northeastern Nigeria, FAO provided affected communities with homestead gardening kits that included short-cycle vegetable seeds, fertilizers and tools, complemented by cash transfers. Moreover, the Organization provided livestock health services, including vaccinations and treatments to protect pastoral assets. Trainings on good agricultural and nutritional practices were also provided.

Somalia

Supported flood-affected agropastoral communities in Hiran and Gedo regions by providing emergency agricultural inputs, including seeds and tools, alongside cash assistance and advisory services.

Ukraine

Assisted rural households in securing spring food production by distributing soybean seed. FAO's support targeted vulnerable households near frontline regions to enable them to sustain their livelihoods and avoid reliance on negative coping mechanisms.

Zambia

Supported drought-affected smallholder farmers by distributing climate-smart input packages and solar-powered irrigation kits. The intervention also included technical support to improve crop yields and livestock management.

Annex 5 – Anticipatory Action window 2024 allocations

Summary of interventions

Afghanistan

In late 2023 and early 2024, dry spell conditions gradually emerged in the western, northern and eastern regions of Afghanistan, intensifying in severity throughout February and March 2024. These conditions further compacted the soil, making it susceptible to the floods that occurred in March, primarily affecting the eastern provinces of Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman. FAO promptly acted to mitigate the impacts of these events. This experience emphasized the need to reinforce AA systems in the country through the development of an AA protocol for drought, in collaboration with relevant partners. The protocol was prioritized to enable quick action for the potential emergence of La Niña in late 2024 or early 2025, which could further induce dry conditions.

Cambodia

In March 2024, FAO's AA protocol for drought in Cambodia was triggered for the first time as the Combined Drought Index exceeded the 70-percent threshold across Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Siem Reap. With drought conditions expected to worsen due to the delayed monsoon, FAO implemented phased actions, including unconditional cash assistance. However, there were delays in finalizing the targeting and selection of beneficiaries. Hence, the intended assistance was provided later than planned as a regular response intervention.

Colombia

Operational preparedness was carried out in August following the triggering of Phase 1, which was defined by a 65-percent probability of surplus rainfall in late July. Anticipatory actions for floods were initiated as Phase 2 was triggered, based on La Niña forecasts and reports from the Institute for Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies, indicating a 60–80 percent likelihood of surplus rainfall expected by mid-September. Actions implemented in Sucre (La Mojana region), Chocó and Nariño (Pacific region), and the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina included cash transfers, the establishment of food and seed supply centres, elevated gardens, livestock shelters, drainage systems, as well as training for indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups, animal health teams and municipal seed banks. Notably, floods occurred in the Chocó region in November 2024.

Madagascar

In early 2024, Madagascar's Grand Sud was showing signs of locust outbreak, potentially threatening food security despite predicted agricultural recovery due to forecasts of La Niña-induced above-average rainfall. Infestation of Malagasy migratory locusts threatened key crops such as rice and maize, and posed a threat to food security. FAO acted early in coordination with governmental counterparts, enhancing national monitoring and control efforts to protect key crops, thereby safeguarding vulnerable rural populations from extensive crop losses.

Malawi

Malawi's 2024–2025 flood trigger had two phases: El Niño-Southern Oscillation forecasts predicting above-average rainfall (Phase 1) and short-range forecasts indicating over 100 mm of rainfall within 24 hours (Phase 2). The early warning issued under Phase 1 for severe flooding activated actions that included the disbursement of cash transfers to targeted farming households in Phalombe along with the implementation of awareness campaigns and capacity-building efforts to reduce La Niña's impacts on agriculture. Phase 2 is being monitored and has not yet been triggered.

Mongolia

The 2023/24 *dzud* in Mongolia started in early November 2023 with a combination of heavy snowfall and blizzards, which worsened by the end of February 2024. The livestock deaths were estimated to have reached nearly 17.4 percent of the national herd. The weather forecast for the upcoming spring season was expected to be particularly challenging, with colder-than-average temperatures, heavy snowfall and frequent storms. These extreme conditions would limit livestock access to pasture, posing a threat to the national economy and leaving thousands of livestock-keeping households in distress. To support livestock-keeping households and protect remaining livestock assets, FAO provided multipurpose cash assistance to targeted households across 108 administrative subdivisions in 15 provinces – scaling up its reach with additional resources from the Central Emergency Response Fund of OCHA, which also supported the procurement of 3.3 million doses of sheep and goat pox vaccine to control disease outbreaks among the surviving livestock.

Mozambique

Under Mozambique's Flood Framework, FAO implemented anticipatory actions using a two-phased flood trigger. Phase 1 relied on El Niño-Southern Oscillation and climate forecasts indicating a high probability of La Niña and above-average rainfall (November 2024–January 2025). Phase 2 was activated upon imminent flood warnings at the identified basins. FAO, in coordination with the National Institute for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, delivered early-maturing seeds, veterinary services, and forecast-based cash transfers, ensuring that farming households in flood-prone areas could prepare effectively for potential floods.

Philippines

In May 2024, the Government of the Philippines declared the onset of the rainy season, anticipating La Niña-driven floods and typhoons. Based on this, FAO launched an AA intervention focused on the high-risk region of Mindanao, with the flexibility to expand to other regions if needed. In October–November 2024, the Philippines was impacted by six typhoons within the span of two weeks. In Isabela, FAO was able to implement anticipatory actions on 9 November before Typhoon Toraji made landfall on 11 November. Targeted farmers and fishers received unconditional cash transfers to mitigate the storm's anticipated impact on livelihoods. After a week, FAO was also able to anticipate the impact of Typhoon Man-Yi before its landfall on 14–16 November. By 16 November, less than eight hours before the typhoon made landfall, the following actions had been completed in Catanduanes and Northern Samar: cash transfers were provided to targeted beneficiaries, boats and fishing assets were secured to protect fishers, and early warning messages were disseminated to facilitate evacuations in other areas.

Somalia

FAO's "Somalia Water and Land Information Management" identified high-risk areas due to La Niña-induced drought and anticipated water shortages.

Somalia (continued)

In response, FAO implemented timely anticipatory actions to minimize the impact of forecasted drought on the most vulnerable agropastoral households. Actions included cash support for drought-affected households, water source verification for real-time warnings and pre-positioning water bladders along migratory routes. Additional measures included impact-based forecast dissemination and veterinary treatments to safeguard livestock health.

South Sudan

In South Sudan, the 2024 AA triggers were based on forecasts of flooding, with above-average rainfall expected through the peak flooding season (October–November), and possibly into early 2025. Historical flood data and forecasts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the United States Geological Survey confirmed high risks of floods. FAO acted early to disseminate flood risk warnings, vaccinate livestock and provide emergency assistance kits, including fishing gear, canoes and vegetable production kits to displaced communities. Although at a lower scale than expected, the floods did materialize in November 2024, and the actions undertaken by FAO based on forecasts have been beneficial for those affected.

Uganda

Uganda's 2024 AA trigger was based on forecasts of below-average rainfall from October to December, affecting mid-western cropping and pastoral areas. Anticipated impacts included water scarcity, reduced yields, pest outbreaks, migration and worsening food insecurity. Based on the forecast, FAO disseminated early warnings, supported community-based drought actions, and disbursed cash assistance to targeted households. The drought conditions materialized, and the full impact is expected to be most evident in 2025. Therefore, FAO is continuing to monitor the situation, providing advisory support, and planning additional interventions in 2025, such as the rehabilitation of communal water infrastructure by desilting three valley tanks and reactivating water user committees.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

In anticipation of La Niña in 2024–2025, FAO activated anticipatory actions based on a two-phased trigger system for floods in Zulia State. The first phase (August–September 2024) was activated when the probability of La Niña exceeded 60 percent as per NOAA estimations. The second phase (September–November 2024) was triggered when the probability exceeded 85 percent, and the Limón River reached 6 meters at Carrasquero. Implemented actions included strengthening early warning systems, flood control measures and provision of training and establishment of seed banks.

Regional – Asia and the Pacific

Given the high risk of typhoons and related floods, FAO implemented anticipatory actions to protect vulnerable households ahead of these hazards. Phase 1 involved pre-positioning supplies to ensure timely actions in Fiji, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam. Phase 2 was based on AA triggers with short lead times, as per existing protocols agreed upon with the respective governments. Of the three countries, only Viet Nam and Lao People's Democratic Republic activated Phase 2 measures in 2024. In Viet Nam, waterproof drums were distributed, and early warnings were issued ahead of Typhoon Trami. In Lao People's Democratic Republic, actions during Typhoon Yagi included early warnings, livestock evacuations and animal feed distribution. In Fiji, Phase 1 focused on pre-positioning hermetic bags and boat-strengthening kits, with preparations for a possible Phase 2 activation.

Annex 6 – Centrality of Protection and PSEA window 2024 allocations

Summary of use

FAO continued to strengthen its capacity to prevent, mitigate and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse across Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Ukraine. Through the recruitment of national PSEA Specialists, FAO enhanced institutional capacity by conducting targeted training, developing tailored action plans and integrating PSEA into country programmes. Specialists facilitated awareness sessions for personnel, partners and local communities, while also strengthening complaint mechanisms and referral pathways in coordination with interagency networks. Outreach efforts, including community consultations and the dissemination of information materials, promoted community engagement. Efforts were further reinforced through increased collaboration with implementing partners, and participation in joint sexual exploitation and abuse risk assessments. These interventions have laid a strong foundation for sustained PSEA activities, with follow-up actions planned to ensure continued integration and effectiveness in safeguarding programme beneficiaries.

Annex 7 – Protracted Crisis window 2024 allocations

Summary of interventions

Myanmar

FAO focused on assisting vulnerable communities in rural areas affected by protracted instability. Emergency support included the provision of agricultural inputs and livestock assistance, along with cash transfers. Moreover, the targeted beneficiaries received technical training on good agricultural and livestock management practices.

Nigeria

FAO supported rural communities in northwestern Nigeria through the distribution of agricultural inputs, post-harvest storage solutions and inputs for homestead gardening, and the facilitation of training on good agricultural practices.

Sudan

FAO's interventions focused on improving the food security of conflict-affected agropastoralist households. Through the distribution of agricultural inputs, livestock vaccinations and technical training, the targeted communities were able to protect their livelihoods and sustain their production.

Annex 8 – Climate Crisis (including El Niño and La Niña) window 2024 allocations

Summary of interventions

Afghanistan and the Niger

In 2024, FAO has launched global resilience-building interventions to address the impacts of El Niño-induced climate extremes on agriculture and food security in vulnerable regions, including Afghanistan and the Niger. Through SFERA-funded activities, FAO is supporting affected communities by implementing a range of interventions, such as distributing drought-tolerant seeds and promoting climate-smart agricultural practices, to sustain food production under adverse conditions. These global efforts aim to minimize risks and losses, protect livelihoods and strengthen resilience to future climate shocks, ensuring that vulnerable populations can recover more effectively from climate-induced disruptions.

South Sudan

FAO supported climate-resilient agricultural livelihoods by promoting climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive practices to address the impacts of floods and prolonged dry spells. Activities focused on improving access to climate-adapted inputs, establishing floating gardens and strengthening post-harvest management to reduce food losses. Livestock support through vaccination and treatment campaigns safeguarded pastoral assets, while gender-sensitive water infrastructure was constructed to enhance resource management. Early warning systems were also strengthened to improve preparedness and response to climate shocks, ensuring timely interventions for vulnerable communities.

Regional – Dry Corridor

FAO provided critical support to vulnerable communities in the Dry Corridor affected by El Niño and La Niña climate extremes. The interventions focused on enhancing resilience through the distribution of drought-tolerant seeds, provision of agricultural inputs, and technical assistance to farmers. Efforts also included strengthening early warning systems and promoting sustainable agricultural practices to mitigate future climate-related risks.

Global

FAO implemented interventions to assess the impacts of El Niño on agricultural livelihoods and food security, globally and across priority countries. The interventions focused on conducting impact assessments, seed security studies and remote sensing to inform timely responses. Stakeholder consultations and validation workshops were organized to ensure evidence-based decision-making. These efforts aimed to enhance preparedness and support adaptive measures to mitigate the effects of El Niño-driven climate shocks on vulnerable communities.

Saving livelihoods saves lives

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