Research Fellowships: International Heritage Protection and Sustainable Development

Call guidelines

June 2022

Introduction

The British Council is offering grants to support a programme of international research fellowships. This Call is to support fellowships on the theme of **International Heritage Protection and Sustainable Development**. A [separate Call](https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/consultancy-opportunities) has also been published to support fellowships on the theme of cultural relations and climate action.

Grants will be awarded to UK higher education institutions (HEIs), Independent Research Organisations (IROs) or other not-for-profit [UK research organisations eligible to receive UKRI funding](https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/eligible_uk_research_organisations_v18_jun_2020.pdf). The grants will be used to fund international early-career researchers [from ODA (Official Development Assistance) countries](https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2022-23-flows.pdf) to undertake **research fellowships** in the UK. The fellowship(s) should be **nine months** in duration.

The HEIs (or other eligible research organisations) that are awarded the grants will be expected to manage and administer the fellowships, including recruitment and onboarding of the research fellows, whilst working in close collaboration with the British Council to develop and supervise the project and support the fellows to deliver their agreed outputs.

Research fellows will be expected to engage closely with the British Council throughout their fellowships, including through spending time based at British Council offices in the UK. Opportunities for research fellows to spend time based at a British Council office in their home countries or region will also be encouraged. Should this be necessitated by public health or other circumstances, there would be potential for some projects to be undertaken in part as ‘virtual fellowships’, i.e. with the research undertaken digitally, working from home. However, as far as possible this programme is intended to support researchers to spend time at research organisations and British Council offices in the UK.

A project brief for this Call is provided below. This details the research context and anticipated outputs, gives further information about the data, networks and expertise that will be made available to support the fellowships and outlines potential project outcomes and impact.

Objectives

The fellowships programme is intended to:

* **generate** **new knowledge** that builds on or complements British Council data, evidence, insight and expertise;
* **diversify and broaden the British Council’s knowledge base**, including through embedding gender sensitivity into research and providing opportunities for knowledge exchange with researchers from the global southand other regions and communities under-represented in global research production and discourse – thereby also supporting the British Council’s own [commitment to EDI](https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/our-values/equality-diversity-inclusion) and its [Anti-Racism Action Plan](https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/our-values/anti-racism-action-plan);
* support the international **capacity building and professional development** of up-and-coming research experts from eligible countries;
* foster **longer-term connections, networks and partnerships** between UK and international researchers and British Council staff;
* promote the **academic engagement and professional networking** of British Council staff and partners;
* enhance the **visibility, use and application** of the data, evidence and other forms of knowledge and insight generated through the British Council’s global programmes and network;
* contribute more broadly to the **UK research and skills agenda** (including the [UK Research and Development Roadmap](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/896799/UK_Research_and_Development_Roadmap.pdf) and the Research England [Knowledge Exchange Framework](https://kef.ac.uk/)).

Who can apply?

Applications must have a single Principal academic supervisor who is an established member of a UK higher education institution (HEI) or approved Independent Research Organisation (IRO) eligible to receive UKRI funding.

The Principal supervisor will be the point of contact for any communication related to the application and, if a grant is awarded, will take the lead responsibility for the conduct of the research and the observance of the terms and conditions. Correspondence regarding the application and the grant if the application is successful will be addressed to the Principal supervisor only (and in the case of any offer letter, to their research office).

There is no limit on the number of Co-supervisors. However, applications should make clear how each Co-supervisor will make a significant contribution to the conduct of the research. The award agreement will be with the institution to which the Principal supervisor is attached (the Administering Institution) and not with any individual.

**International Co-supervisors**

We encourage proposals that include Co-supervisors based in overseas institutions, and particularly those based in ODA-eligible countries. It will be the responsibility of the Administering Institution to distribute the grant to the international Co-supervisor’s institution and ensure compliance with any terms and conditions of the grant.

**International partner organisations**

We encourage applications that outline potential to involve international partners such as NGOs, third-sector organisations and civil society groups, particularly those based in ODA-eligible countries. International partners can support the collection and interpretation of data, facilitate access to individuals and groups central to the project proposal, and facilitate the dissemination of findings to key stakeholders – including in collaboration with the British Council own global network and partners. However, we recognise that it may be necessary to wait until the researcher(s) have been recruited in order for specific international partners and engagement plans to be established.

**Eligibility for research fellowships**

This Call is intended to support fellowships for **early-career researchers**. We define early career researchers as those who are within 10 years of receiving their PhD. Allowances can be made for career breaks.

At this stage, we do not specify (or limit the number of) ODA-eligible countries from which researchers will be eligible to apply for the fellowships. Eligible countries will be determined by the British Council in collaboration with the HEIs (or other eligible research organisations) that are awarded grants under this Call. Applicants to this Call are asked to indicate any countries or regions in which their institutions have particularly strong international links, reach or networks and to provide details.

Funding available

The total fund being made available by the British Council under this Call is **£45,000**. The final number of grants awarded, and their amounts, will depend on the assessment of the proposals received, the levels of match funding committed by grant recipients, and the proposed duration of the fellowships.

Grant applicants are asked to provide a statement and breakdown of the amount of funding requested for the fellowship (see *How to Apply* below) and to outline any match funding and in-kind contributions that are being committed to the project.

The application must clearly state what expenditure items the award will fund. Awards are intended primarily to provide stipends and cover travel and accommodation costs for research fellows. The scheme will not fund items of equipment which institutions would normally be expected to possess (for example, computing equipment such as laptops).

Eighty per cent of the value of the award(s) will be paid upon completion of relevant checks and the signing of the collaboration agreement. The remaining twenty per cent will be paid upon recruitment of the research fellow.

Timeframes

* Submit all application documents including project proposal, budget, and Gender Equality Statement by **Monday 26 September 2022** at 24:00 BST.
* The evaluation process will take place between **27 September and 14 October 2022**.
* Decisions on awards will be communicated to the applicants by **21 October 2022**.
* Collaboration Agreements will be finalised by **end of October 2022**.
* Subject to contract execution and due diligence checks, initial grant payments will be made by end of **November 2022**.
* It is anticipated that the fellowships funded through this Call will commence in early 2023; with a requirement that all fellowships commence by **31 March 2023** at the latest.

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| September 26 2022, 24:00 BST | Deadline for applications |
| October 2022 | Assessment of proposals and selection of awards;  Signing of Collaboration Agreements |
| November 2022 | Fellowships advertised (application deadline: early Dec 2022) |
| December 2022 | Shortlisting and interviews of research fellows |
| From January 2023 | Fellowships get underway |
| 31 March 2023 | Deadline for commencement of fellowships |

Conditions of the award and expectations of grant recipients

**Management of funds and payment of stipends:**

In all cases, the HEI or other eligible research organisation that is awarded the grant will be required to administer the funding allocated to the project, to act as the employer and sponsor for any required visa/work permit and to manage payment of the stipend. Travel arrangements (including travel insurance) for any international travel or placements agreed as part of the fellowship would be arranged by the fellow in liaison with the university or other partner organisation.

**Selection of research fellows:**

Whilst the HEIs (or other eligible research organisations) that are awarded grants will be expected to manage and administer the recruitment of research fellows, it will be a requirement that shortlisting and interview panels include at least one representative of the British Council. Selection criteria should be developed and agreed in liaison with the British Council.

**Collaboration agreement:**

All projects will be governed through an agreement signed by the British Council and the organisation that is awarded the grant, ensuring the project aligns with British Council policies and processes, that the roles and responsibilities of each party are clear, that appropriate insurances and liability cover are in place, and that there is agreement around IPR. A template collaboration agreement is provided for reference below.



**Research ethics:**

All projects will be required to adhere to the principles of the British Council research ethics policy, accessible below. This stipulates that where research is undertaken as a joint partnership between the British Council and a partner organisation, as is the case for the fellowship programme, there is a joint accountability between the British Council and the partner to ensure that research is undertaken in an ethical manner, and this should be outlined in the collaboration agreement.

It is anticipated that the projects funded under this Call will be governed by the grant recipient institution’s research ethics policy and processes, as these should adhere to the principles of the British Council policy. Should there be any conflict or discrepancy between the British Council policy and that of the partner, the British Council policy will be expected to apply.



How to apply

Please complete the Application form (Annex 1) and the Budget spreadsheet (Annex 2) and return, along with your gender equality statement, to [researchglobal@britishcouncil.org](mailto:researchglobal@britishcouncil.org) by **26 September 2022**, 24:00 BST

As noted, the Principal Supervisor must be an established member of a UK higher education institution (HEI) or approved Independent Research Organisation (IRO) eligible to receive UKRI funding. The Principal supervisor will be the point of contact for any communication related to the application.

Selection process

You will have your response evaluated as set out below:

Stage 1: A check will be made to ensure all required documents have been provided and completed according to the specifications. Incomplete or incorrect submissions will be disqualified and not evaluated further.

Stage 2: The proposal will then be evaluated in accordance with the criteria and weightings set out below.

A British Council panel will evaluate the proposals against the following criteria:

* **Academic expertise:** Relevance and fit to the project of the academic expertise of Principal supervisor and Co-supervisors:
  + **20%**
* **Approach:** Extent to which proposed development of the project brief and collaboration with the British Council and other partners will support the programme’s objectives:
  + **35%**
* **Research environment:** Level of institutional support for the academic supervision, networking, professional development and capacity building of the research fellow:
  + **15%**
* **Administration:** Capacity to manage and administer the recruitment and onboarding of the research fellow and provide pastoral support:
  + **15%**
* **Funding:** Level of in-kind support and match funding committed to the project, the degree to which the costs requested from the British Council are justified and clearly laid out in Budget spreadsheet (Annex 2):
  + **15%**

All applicants will be required to provide a gender equality statement as part of their application (see below).

The British Council reserves the right to contact applicants to request or negotiate an amendment to any aspect of the proposal, such as budget items or project timeline, in order to best meet the objectives of the programme.

The British Council reserves the right to make information on the successful applications freely and publicly available. The British Council will inform applicants as to whether they are successful or not. The British Council is not obliged to enter into further discussions or offer advice on applications. The decision of the British Council regarding these grants is final.

Gender equality statement

All applicants are required to provide a Gender Equality Statement. This statement will form part of the evaluation of responses against the ‘Approach’ criterion (see above) and must clearly describe how meaningful yet proportionate consideration will be given as to how the fellowship will contribute to reducing gender inequalities, in line with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act (2014).

The Gender Equality Statement should be no longer than one page and submitted along with the other application documents (Application form, budget spreadsheet, CVs). It is expected that some projects will have less impact on gender and gender relations and professional judgement of the applicants should be exercised to ensure appropriate consideration of the context and intended aims of the project.

Applicant screening

In order to comply with UK government legislation, the British Council may at any point during the application process carry out searches of relevant third-party screening databases to ensure that neither the applicant institutions nor any of the applicants’ employees, partners, directors or shareholders are listed as:

* an individual or entity with whom national or supranational bodies have decreed organisations should not have financial dealings;
* being wanted by Interpol or any national law enforcement body in connection with crime;
* being subject to regulatory action by a national or international enforcement body;
* being subject to export, trade or procurement controls or (in the case of an individual) as being disqualified from being a company director; and/or
* being a heightened risk individual or organisation, or (in the case of an individual) a politically exposed person.

If the applicant or any other party is listed in a Screening Database for any of the reasons set out above, the British Council will assess the applicant as ineligible to apply for this grant call. The applicant must provide the British Council with all information reasonably requested by the British Council to complete the screening searches.

Detailed project brief

British Council contacts

Ian Thomas, Head of Arts Research  
Nikki Locke, Senior Relationship Manager Cultural Heritage  
Steve Stenning, Director Culture in Action

Regional focus of fellowship project

Middle East and North Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa

Research context

The importance of cultural heritage as an enabler of sustainable development is widely acknowledged. However, its role has remained marginalised in past and current international development agendas. The relevance of cultural heritage for sustainable development has been widely recognised and advocated for by leading international organisations (e.g. United Cities and Local Governments 2010; ICOMOS 2011; UNESCO 2013, 2015b; UN-HABITAT 2016; Labadi et al. 2021). Attempts to incorporate cultural heritage into development discourses have occurred in parallel with the concept of sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been adopted by 193 Member States of the United Nations. The Agenda sets out a future global vision for social, economic and environmental development encompassing people, planet, peace, prosperity and partnership (the five Ps). As part of the process for reviewing and monitoring progress towards the Goals, all UN Member States are expected to carry out a national review of progress towards the Goals at least once in the period to 2030. Culture, including heritage, is often presented as fundamental to addressing the SDGs: since 2010, the United Nations has adopted no fewer than five major policy recommendations that assert its importance as a driver and enabler of development.

In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the economic, social, and environmental importance of arts and culture heritage. Policy makers are increasingly recognising culture’s catalytic role. The African Union declared 2021 to be the African Year of Art, Culture and Heritage. France, Greece, Italy, India, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other countries put their cultural and creative sectors at the heart of their post-COVID recovery plans, while the G20 Ministers of Culture called for the full recognition of culture and the creative economy in development processes and policies as a driver and enabler of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In December 2021, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a new Resolution on the subject. In 2022, culture’s contribution to global development will be the focus of the Global Forum on Arts, Culture, Creativity and Technology in Colombia (June 2022), and of the Global Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development in Mexico (‘Mondiacult’, 28-30 September 2022).

Since 2013, when it was estimated to account for 30 million jobs and 3% of GDP, the cultural economy has been growing fast. Today it contributes around 4.7% of GDP in Lebanon, 7% in Indonesia, the Philippines and Zimbabwe, and 10% in Brazil and the Republic of Korea. Global creative economy revenues surpass India’s GDP. In some countries, such as Mexico and Uganda, and in major cities such as Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Seoul and Tokyo, the share of cultural jobs is between 9% and 13%. Globally, the cultural and creative sector is the largest employer of youth and it employs more women than men. As these statistics neither capture the spillover effects on other parts of the economy, such as cultural tourism, education, and digital services, nor the benefits to public health, the real impact of the cultural and creative sectors is even more pronounced.

In 2018, the British Council launched its first Missing Pillar Report. 'The Missing Pillar' explores the place of culture and heritage in the SDGs through research, policy and practice. It analyses where arts and culture as a sector and as a creative process can fit within a number of goals, including their targets and indicators. 11 British Council programmes provide examples of cultural initiatives around the world, tackling a variety of issues and cutting across sectors, such as sustainable fashion, creative inclusion, and cultural heritage protection. The recommendations from the report advocate for the SDGs to be more accessible to the cultural sector, for them to be embedded in the delivery of cultural initiatives based on local needs, and for their impact to be measured accordingly.

The report recommends taking an inclusive approach, involving communities and local actors to understand cross-cutting needs and ecosystems to ensure sustainability. It also calls for a focus on digital technologies to raise awareness and a clearer response to the climate emergency from the cultural sector. This report is a tool to increase understanding of the link between arts and culture and sustainable development. It is a first step at framing the impact of our British Council programmes alongside the SDGs. We will continue to advocate for the value of culture as a fourth pillar of sustainable development and a key part of cultural relations.

**Related publications and insight:**

* Missing Pillar Report and Talks <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/our-stories/the-missing-pillar-sdgs>
* The Cultural Dimension of Sustainable Development <https://eunicglobal.eu/news/culture-sdgs-report>
* AHRC funded PRAXIS Heritage and Global Challenges <https://changingthestory.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/110/2021/02/Heritage-for-Global-Challenges-Report-2021.pdf>
* Harnessing cultural heritage for sustainable development: an analysis of three internationally funded projects in MENA Countries <https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/176741/1/13527258.2021.pdf>
* UNESCO UK Heritage and Sustainable Development <https://unesco.org.uk/conference/heritage-and-our-sustainable-future/research-practice-policy-and-impact/>
* Cultural Protection Fund Evaluation and Research <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/evaluating-impact-cultural-protection-fund>
* The Cultural Turn in International Development: Participatory Infrastructures and Value in the Arts <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british-council-cultural-turn-international-development-participatory-infrastructures.pdf>
* Cultural Heritage for Incluisve Growth <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/cultural-heritage>
* The UNESCO Global Report, Re|Shaping Policies for Creativity – Addressing culture as a global public good <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/publications/2022-global-report-reshaping-policies-creativity>
* Rethinking Heritage for Sustainable Development (2022) <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/185111#:~:text=Rethinking%20Heritage%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20constitutes%20a%20substantial%20and%20original,of%20its%20marginalisation%20from%20the>
* Consideration of culture is vital if we are to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590332221000580>

British Council data, evidence and expertise available

Launched in 2016, DCMS’s flagship Cultural Protection Fund (CPF) is run in partnership with the British Council, who oversee programme delivery and development. The fund aims to help to create sustainable opportunities for economic and social development through building local capacity to foster, safeguard and promote cultural heritage, particularly in regions affected by conflict. Since 2016, over 45,000 people across the Middle East and North Africa have participated in cultural heritage protection activities via the CPF.

Recognising the urgent need to protect cultural heritage from climate change, in 2020 DCMS and the British Council launched a new climate programme as part of the CPF, the Disaster and Climate Change Mitigation funding round. Funds were awarded to five global heritage projects that respond to the risk of climate change to heritage in East Africa. The projects aim to advance regional cultural protection by supporting knowledge exchange between experts and empowering local organisations with the skills to protect their cultural heritage.

Between June and September 2021, The British Council, The Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and the V&A partnered to produce their second interactive series of webinar events focussing on [Global Heritage Perspectives](https://www.vam.ac.uk/info/culture-in-crisis-global-heritage-perspectives). This series examines how the experiences of recent years have encouraged cultural organisations across the globe to adapt and transform in the face of global challenges and new opportunities.

Global Heritage Perspectives explores innovative approaches to cultural heritage management and stewardship; to understand and reflect on how responses to crises have been shaped over the last year. In this series we discover novel strategies that respond to crisis at scale and explore the degree to which cultural heritage can be a route to addressing environmental, economic and social issues around the world.

In 21-22, The Cultural Protection Fund has awarded more than £2.4M in follow-on grants to international partnership projects supporting vital heritage protection in the Middle East and North and East Africa.

* Cultural Protection Fund funded project data and evaluation reports, for example, evaluation reports such as <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/evaluating-impact-cultural-protection-fund> together with project data from the Cultural Protection Fund funded projects, data on key metrics such as: the number of artefacts restored; number of people trained (no. of men trained / no. of women trained); number of volunteers; and/or income generated for the local economy (i.e., through additional funding); evidence of project achievement against the three CPF outcomes and three sub-outcomes; and, insights about learning regarding the impact, effectiveness, sustainability and value for money of the Fund.
* Examples of some of the Cultural Protection Fund projects include <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/cultural-protection-fund/projects>
* Evaluations of other international Cultural Heritage Protection funding such as <https://www.cmi.no/publications/4867-evaluation-of-norwegian-support-to-the-protection>, the US Ambassadors Fund and Prince Klaus Foundation.
* Cultural Heritage for Inclusive Growth research reports and evaluation reports, for example, <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/cultural-heritage>
* Missing Pillar Talks and Report <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/our-stories/missing-pillar-talks> - a follow up to the Missing Pillar Report is being commissioned Summer 2022 which this Fellowship can be involved with.
* AHRC funded Cultural Heritage funded research project findings around sustainable development <https://changingthestory.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/110/2021/02/Heritage-for-Global-Challenges-Report-2021.pdf>

External networks and contacts

Through our What Works Programme for Heritage Protection, the Fellow will have a range of international networks to access and draw from, such as: -

* International Cultural Protection Funders Network
* EU Practitioners Network for Development[[1]](#footnote-1)
* EUNIC international knowledge sharing events on culture, cultural relations, sustainable development[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Cultural Heritage for Inclusive Growth Peer and Collaborative Learning Network
* Joint DCMS / British Council Fellow for International Heritage Protection and Soft Power[[3]](#footnote-3)
* ICOMOS
* UNESCO through our new Partnership Agreement between the British Council and UNESCO with a focus on research policy and cultural heritage.

Policy and/or public engagement opportunities

* British Council Insight Articles targeting HMG and policy audiences in the UK, for example <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/insight-articles/cultural-heritage-protection>
* International conference presentations such as Cultural Protection Fund conference, targeting the wider international heritage protection sector and stakeholders, British Council Research and Policy Insight Community of Practice (internal) and also International Cultural Relations Research Alliance[[4]](#footnote-4) (external) targeting and reaching international researchers in this space.
* There might also be opportunities through our new partnership agreement between British Council and UNESCO for engaging with UNESCO and also the UK National Commission for UNESCO.
* Engagement with UK HMG Departments such as DCMS Cultural Diplomacy Team through the What Works Programme Board and one to one meetings between British Council and DCMS as part of our What Works programme[[5]](#footnote-5).

Potential fellowship deliverables

By the end of the Fellowship, the researcher should deliver a written report for the British Council, which we aim to publish and share, which evaluates and explores the evidence on the role of cultural heritage protection within international frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), international human rights, humanitarian and conflict and present systematic evidence as to “what works”. The report should strengthen and add value to recent relevant research and analysis supported by DCMS, British Council, AHRC, UNESCO and other organisations.

Other outputs might include: -

* Policy briefs and presentations - verbal and written - for use with British Council and HMG Policy teams such as DCMS and FCDO.
* Policy/Research teach-ins, Community of Practice sessions, blogs and creative media.
* Contributing towards the scoping and development of the future ‘what works’ agenda as required.
* Other publications and outputs that contribute to building the evidence base for policy.
* Support for the British Council in the evaluation of the fellowship programme and improvement of future schemes.

Outcomes and impact

This Fellowship aims to bring together, in synthesis, examples from the international evidence base and learning around heritage protection’s contribution to Sustainable Development. The Fellowship aims to connect, evaluate and explore the evidence the role of cultural heritage protection across global and local contexts, within international frameworks.

This Fellowship supports and makes a contribution the international debate around the role of heritage protection and sustainable development together which contributing to all four overarching research themes for the DCMS funded What Works Approach to International Heritage Protection: -

* International Heritage Protection contribution to Sustainable Development
* International Heritage Protection and Climate Change
* International Heritage Protection through Cultural Relations Approach
* Developing approaches to evaluating and researching intentional heritage protection (explore and test evaluation and research methods)

Skills, knowledge and experience required

The research fellow(s) appointed to this project would be required to have:

* Knowledge and experience of the international cultural heritage protection agenda.
* Knowledge of the Sustainable Development agenda and the UN SDGs.
* Knowledge and/or experience of inclusive and/or people centred approaches.
* Excellent English written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to translate complex information into meaningful narrative that is accessible to a non-academic audience.
* A commitment to professional development and ability to build networks and exchange knowledge with British Council experts, partners and stakeholders based around the world.

1. <https://www.dev-practitioners.eu/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.eunicglobal.eu/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/inform-policies-for-culture-heritage-and-the-creative-industries/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.ifa.de/en/research/icrra/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dcmss-international-cultural-heritage-protection-programme#:~:text=Cultural%20Protection%20Fund%20(DCMS%2FBritish%20Council)%202016%20%2D%202022&text=The%20fund%20aims%20to%20help,in%20regions%20affected%20by%20conflict>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)