



UNFPA HUMANITARIAN THEMATIC FUND
2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Background

The Humanitarian Thematic Fund (HTF), a co-financing mechanism, was launched in late 2018 to provide flexible, multi-year funding, including greater opportunities for “bridge” funding while awaiting dedicated donor co-financing for the increasing number of humanitarian crises across the globe. The HTF is designed to provide timely, strategic and multi-year funding for rapid and ongoing response, for preparedness and for strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus. Through an expedited internal grants mechanism, the HTF provides the opportunity for global, regional and country programmes to access funding not being provided through bilateral funding arrangements, thereby expanding the reach and scope of UNFPA’s life-saving humanitarian operations. The HTF is one of UNFPA’s most flexible humanitarian funding mechanisms.

Donor Contributions

In 2019, its first year of operations, the HTF received a total of \$5.8 million in financial contributions from Canada, Denmark, Norway, Republic of Korea and Friends of UNFPA. The generous contributions from donors are of vital importance for ensuring UNFPA is able to flexibly respond to countries in humanitarian emergencies.

Table 1 - Donor Contributions to HTF in 2019

Funder	Foreign Amount	USD Amount	HTF allocated
Norway	NOK 25,000,000	\$2,753,607	\$582,080
Denmark	DKK 8,800,000	\$1,341,668	\$323,460
Republic of Korea	USD 1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$300,000
Canada	CAD 1,000,000	\$742,391	\$193,357
Friends of UNFPA ¹	USD 19,246	\$19,246	\$161,136
	Grand Total	\$5,856,912	\$508,641

2019 Overview

In 2019, the HTF disbursed more than \$2 million to provide time-critical and lifesaving humanitarian support in Colombia, Congo, Niger, the Philippines, and Turkey, as well as the Latin America and the Caribbean regional office in support of the Whole of Venezuela regional response.

Table 2 - List of HTF recipients in 2019

Allocation Time	Country	Region	HTF allocated
May 2019	Turkey	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	\$582,080
July 2019	Colombia	Latin America and the Caribbean	\$323,460
July 2019	Philippines	Asia and the Pacific	\$300,000
November 2019	Niger	West and Central Africa	\$193,357
November 2019	Congo	West and Central Africa	\$161,136
November 2019	Latin America and the Caribbean regional office	Latin America and the Caribbean	\$508,641

In addition, in January and February 2020, HTF funding was provided to another seven countries facing humanitarian crises, namely Uganda, Rwanda, Egypt, Cameroon, Kenya, Sudan and Democratic Republic of the Congo, totalling \$2 million. Around 700,000 women, girls and young people are expected to be reached with funds allocated in 2019.

¹Friends of UNFPA is a U.S.-based nonprofit organisation promoting the health, dignity, and rights of women and girls around the world by supporting the life-saving work of UNFPA.

HTF in Action: Rapid and Life-saving Response

The HTF continues to enable UNFPA to deliver rapid and life-saving responses in many contexts around the world. For example, when flooding impacted the Republic of Congo in 2019, UNFPA was able to deploy HTF resources to help 18,750 people, including 12,500 women of childbearing age by strengthening the capacity of service providers in health centers, improving access to quality health care for the flood victims, and ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health services and clinical management to survivors of gender-based violence.

Through the HTF, UNFPA's Latin America and the Caribbean regional office (LACRO) was able to provide time-critical, life-saving sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV) assistance in response to the Whole of Venezuela crisis. The escalating situation in Venezuela and the impact of mixed migration flows into neighbouring countries has brought an unprecedented level of urgency for a coordinated, regional response. Approximately four million Venezuelans are currently located outside of their homes in other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. UNFPA and its partners continue to provide technical support utilizing LACRO's roving GBV and SRH specialists in these countries, most notably Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago. The implementation period of this project is throughout the year 2020. UNFPA is also working on improvement of access to SRH services, distribution of reproductive health kits, establishing GBV referral pathways and safe spaces, and in leading GBV working groups both regionally and at national levels.

HTF resources were also allocated to the Philippines country office during the Marawi crisis that displaced hundreds of thousands of people. Targeting the needs of vulnerable populations in evacuation sites, resettlement sites, and host families, UNFPA was able to reach more than 46,000 pregnant women with services relating to SRH, GBV, cash voucher assistance and women-friendly safe spaces.

With the HTF, the Colombia country office was able to deploy health and protection teams, develop a case management system and ensure availability of essential reproductive health services in 17 health centres and mobile clinics. The funds also supported UNFPA Turkey to distribute over 40,000 dignity kits, 1,000 newborn kits, train 50 service providers, reaching more than 70,000 women, girls and young people in 2019, the eighth year of the protracted Syrian crisis.





Flexible and Multi-Year Funding

About half of the HTF funded projects in 2019 were multi-year projects that end in 2020. The flexibility provided by donors contributing to the HTF is of vital importance to support country offices in planning their projects in a more efficient and predictable manner without having to complete the project within one calendar year and then requesting resources again in the following year to complete any remaining activities. The HTF, as a pooled, multi-year funding modality, brings great added value to UNFPA's humanitarian response.

Lower Cost and Increased Quality Assurance

Unearmarked funding significantly reduces the transaction costs associated with management of individual agreements, allowing for a lower indirect cost rate (7 per cent in lieu of 8 per cent), while harmonizing and simplifying reporting requirements. Strengthened quality assurance over country office proposals ensures well designed programme implementation and reliable programme reporting. In the spirit of the Grand Bargain², these actions significantly enable UNFPA to flexibly provide rapid resource allocation in response to emergencies and opportunities to support underfunded crises.

²An article on how HTF reduces transaction costs published on IASC Grand Bargain website: [The Grand Bargain in Practice: UNFPA's pooled fund reducing the costs of humanitarian response](#)

2020 HTF Allocations - Interim Update

In 2020, more donors expressed significant interest in utilizing the HTF to support women, girls and young people in need, in addition to the donors who already contributed to the HTF in 2019. As of the end of June 2020, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, UNFPA's Individual Giving Program and Iceland have committed or pledged a total of \$25.2 million to the fund, in large part to support UNFPA's COVID-19 response.

In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, effective and efficient humanitarian response is needed more than ever. The HTF continues to be the most flexible and central funding source for UNFPA's response to COVID-19, especially in countries that are part of the [UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (GHRP).

Table 3 - Donor Contributions to HTF in 2020 (interim as of 30 June)

Funder	Foreign Amount	USD Amount
United Kingdom	GBP 10,000,000	\$12,422,360
Denmark	DKK 31,000,000	\$4,419,000
Norway	NOK 35,000,000	\$3,380,663
Australia	AUD 4,500,000	\$2,988,048
Canada	CAD 1,500,000	\$1,073,729
Republic of Korea	USD 500,000	\$500,000
Individual Giving Programme	USD 242,919	\$242,919
Iceland	ISK 20,000,000	\$136,000
	Grand Total	\$25,162,718

As of May 2020, a total of \$18.5 million HTF funding has been allocated, or is ready to disburse, to support humanitarian interventions in 51 countries in each of the six regions covered by UNFPA regional offices, including: \$2.3 million allocated to 11 countries to strengthen SRH and GBV interventions in various emergencies prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; another \$6.2 million allocated to 41 country offices for COVID-19 response; and an additional \$10 million to be utilized to procure personal protective equipment (PPE) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide, in line with the GHRP.

The HTF continues to provide flexible and life-saving funding to support countries in emergencies in 2020. For example, in Uganda, which hosts the largest number of refugees in Africa, 13,379 pregnant women will be utilizing antenatal care at health facilities, 1,607 births will be delivered by skilled health personnel, and around 1,000 GBV survivors will be supported with information and clinical services through HTF grants. The HTF is also helping increase utilization of life-saving SRH, GBV and HIV/AIDS services in Rwanda, targeting over 28,000 refugees in four refugee camps and an emergency transit center.

When intercommunal tensions were aggravated in Geneina and West Darfur in Sudan, the HTF was quickly deployed to the Sudan country office to help 27,500 women and girls, ensuring that they could freely access basic services and strengthened community protection networks that provide safe and confidential access to GBV survivors. More than 10,000 dignity kits were distributed to vulnerable women and girls in need. Other HTF funded interventions included supporting three safe spaces and three mobile clinics in Cameroon in response to the socio-political crisis; increasing access for 384,000 women of reproductive age to quality reproductive health services and safe births in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; and providing essential

SRH and hygiene supplies and temporary shelters for 12,000 women and girls returning to Venezuela.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, effective and efficient humanitarian response has been needed more than ever. In line with the spirit of the Grand Bargain, the HTF has functioned well as a flexible, reprogrammable funding source for UNFPA to respond to new humanitarian crises with maximum budget flexibility, adaptive programming, meaningful partner interaction, and harmonised due diligence by United Nations agencies. In response to the global outbreak of COVID-19 infections, starting in March 2020, a few existing HTF-funded projects were able to re-programme to adapt to the need for prevention measures including restricted movement and social-distancing. At the same time, more new requests were approved to ensure continuity of essential GBV and SRH services, mostly through remote mechanisms. For example, HTF funding was disbursed to Kenya to support continuation of life-saving infection protection services for mothers and newborns during the COVID-19 outbreak. In Ecuador, reproductive health kits, dignity kits, PPE and online training on the MISP will be provided at health centers, targeting more than 54,000 migrants and refugees.

The UNFPA Humanitarian Office also developed a list of standard interventions as a guidance for COVID-19 response and as part of the HTF funding request template. After consultation with regional offices, an additional \$6.2 million of HTF resources were allocated to 41 countries in early June, especially targeting GHRP countries



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