



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



REPORT ON USE OF FLEXIBLE FUNDING IN 2018

JUNE 2019





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Left: At 250 square kilometres, and with a population of well over quarter of a million people, Bidibidi is the world's largest refugee settlement. All of its residents are from South Sudan and two-thirds are children below the age of 18. Uganda, which hosts one of the world's largest refugee populations, has over a million registered South Sudanese. Uganda's progressive refugee policy is unique – it allows refugees to live a normal life just like Ugandan citizens, including freedom of movement, the right to work, access to education and healthcare and the allocation of land to build homes and farm crops.

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Cover Image: Malak, eight years old, and her brother Muntasir, three years old, fled with their father from Hudaydah to Dhamar Governorate, in Yemen. UNHCR is responding to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, providing emergency assistance to those forcibly displaced by the conflict. © UNHCR/ARWA AL SABRI



A Rohingya girl carries a bag of rice to her family's shelter in Kutupalong camp, south-east Bangladesh.

INTRODUCTION

In the course of 2018, conflict, persecution and civil strife uprooted millions of people, in harrowing circumstances. In many parts of the world, the politics around refugee and migration issues became more acrimonious and polarized, with direct consequences for the lives of many refugees who were denied refuge, separated from family members, or pushed back to situations of danger.

Yet at the same time, a groundswell of solidarity was evident. Long-standing host countries stood firm in their commitment to protection principles and humanitarian values, and people across all walks of life came together to welcome and support refugees, including in countries where official policies became more restrictive.

Stretching around the world, the operational environment facing UNHCR and its partners was complex. It impacted all people of concern to UNHCR—refugees and asylum-seekers, returnees, stateless persons, and internally displaced people. It went from sudden-onset emergencies to protracted crises, some of them entering their fourth decade, in which UNHCR safeguarded fundamental rights, responded with lifesaving support, and worked to build better futures for people of concern.

UNHCR's budget in 2018 grew to \$8.220 billion, and the funds available to it came to \$4.710 billion. That included \$4.141 in voluntary contributions from donors, of which \$1.372 billion, or 33%, was flexible—\$617.4 million in unearmarked funding, and another \$754.6 million as softly earmarked.

These funds were critical throughout the year—particularly at the beginning of the year—to UNHCR operations, and to its global programmes. They supported the bedrock of UNHCR's humanitarian and solutions work worldwide.

This report acknowledges the generosity of those donors which provided UNHCR with flexible funding. It goes into detail and adds depth on how UNHCR used this valuable funding to kick-start emergency responses, to bolster underfunded operations, and to enable operations to implement their programmes as fully as possible.

To all donors—governmental and private—of unearmarked and softly earmarked funding, UNHCR extends its most sincere thanks.



Two Venezuelan children play near the San Miguel International Bridge on the Ecuador-Colombia border.

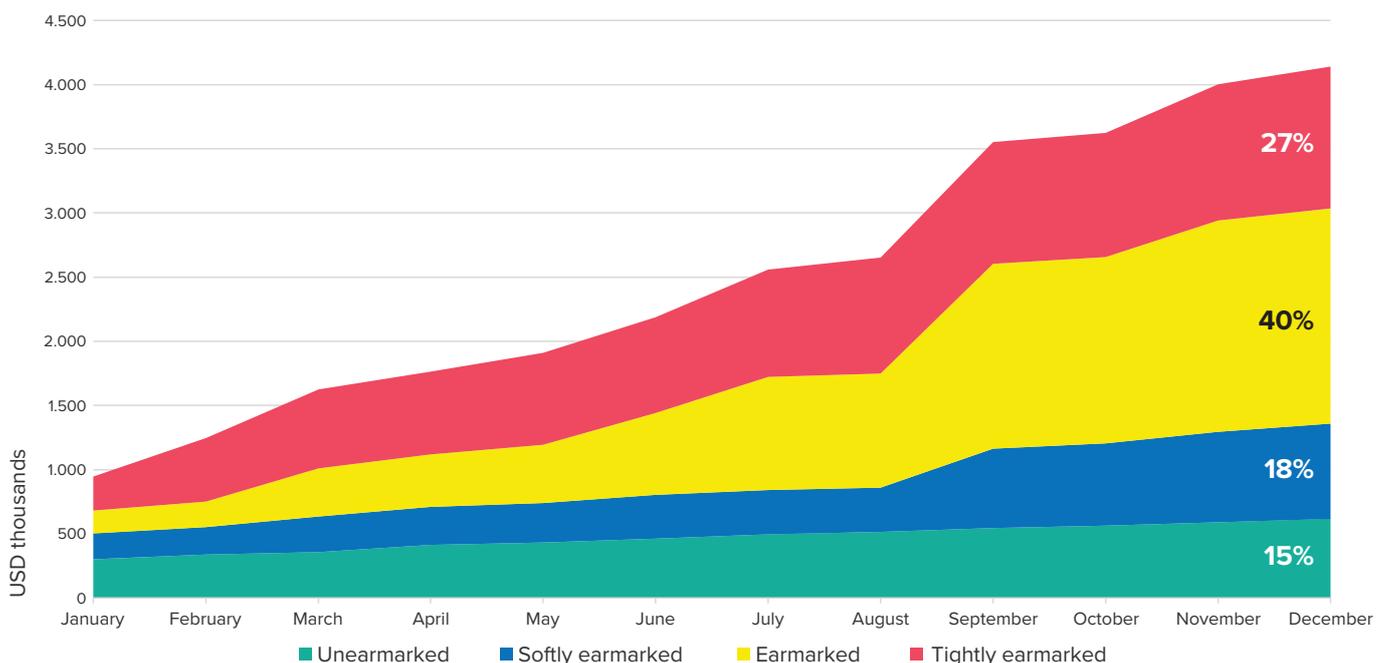
UNHCR'S FLEXIBLE FUNDING

UNHCR defines two main types of funding as flexible: softly earmarked funding, and unearmarked funding.

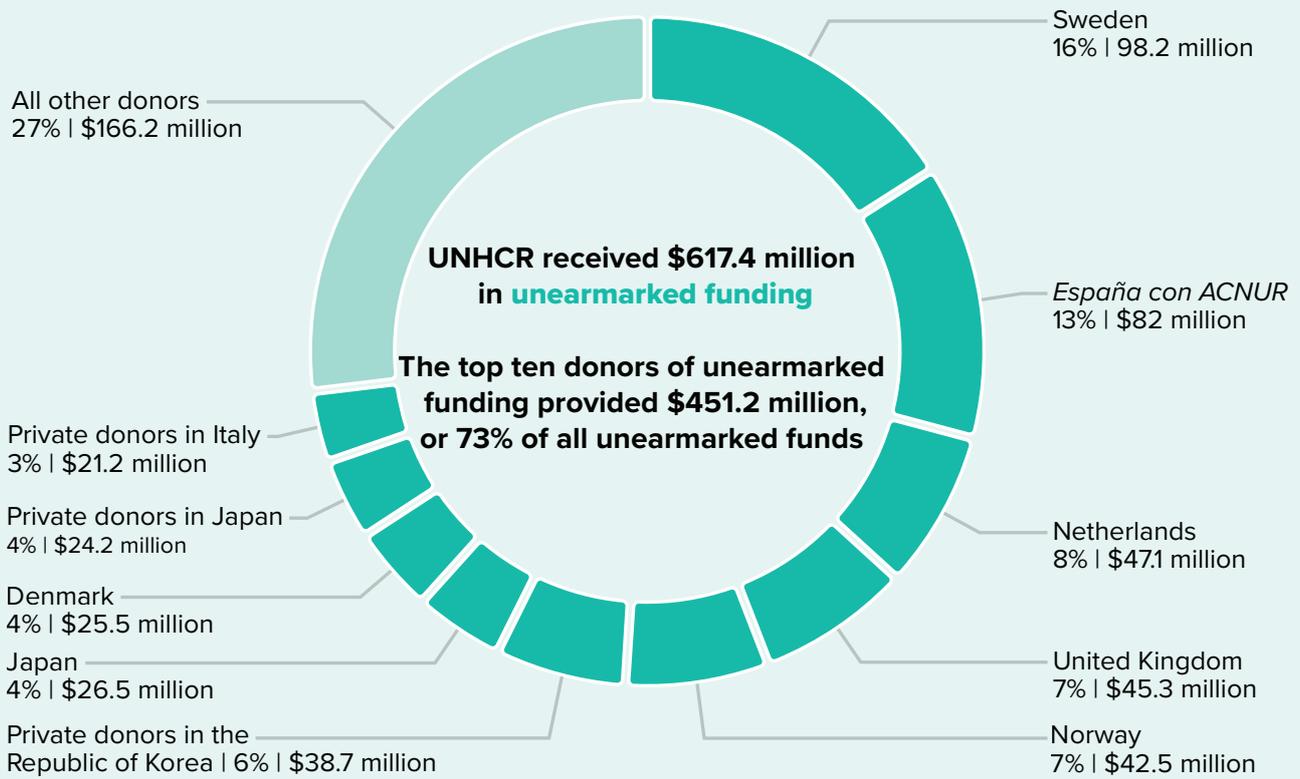
Softly earmarked funding allows UNHCR to use it across the range of countries, activities or themes in a given region or situation in accordance with identified priorities. UNHCR received \$754.6 million in softly earmarked funding, a slight decline of 3% from the \$768 million received in 2017.

Unearmarked funding is contributed without restrictions on its use. It allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Unearmarked funding came to \$617.4 million. Overall, this was an increase of nearly 5% on the \$588.7 million received in 2017. Some 56% of UNHCR's unearmarked funding was received in the first quarter of the year, a vital indication of timeliness and providing the Office with valuable flexibility.

Timeliness of funding | 2018



Sources of flexible funding



Unearmarked funding

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