

REPORT ON USE OF FLEXIBLE FUNDING IN 2019



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Left: Children run past tents as they play at a site for internally displaced persons in Kasenyi, Ituri, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. © UNHCR/JOHN WESSELS

Cover Image: 6Afghan returnee from Pakistan, Umar Khan, 65, collects water from a solar-operated well near his home in Tarakhail Daag, near Kabul. Before the well was built with UNHCR's support, Umar had to walk far to collect water from a well near the main road or buy it from a water tanker. © UNHCR/CLAIRE THOMAS



An internally displaced Congolese woman works on farmland in Lusenda that is part of Evariste Mfaume's agricultural project. Evariste Mfaume was the winner of the 2019 Nansen Award for Africa.

INTRODUCTION

People of concern to UNHCR continued to face new and protracted displacement, with some protracted displacement crises entering their fourth decade, and in places a third generation born into displacement.

The operational environment facing UNHCR and its partners in 2019 was a complex one as they worked to come to the assistance of refugees and asylum-seekers, returnees, stateless persons, internally displaced people, and others of concern.

Throughout the year, UNHCR worked to safeguard fundamental rights, respond with lifesaving support, and built better futures for people of concern.

Flexible funding—meaning that which was unearmarked, softly earmarked, and particularly multi-year funding—was one of the most important resources at UNHCR’s disposal. These funds were critical throughout the year, particularly flexible at the beginning and end of the year, as they provided the bedrock of UNHCR’s humanitarian and solutions work worldwide, enabling it to meet the needs of people of concern.

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.

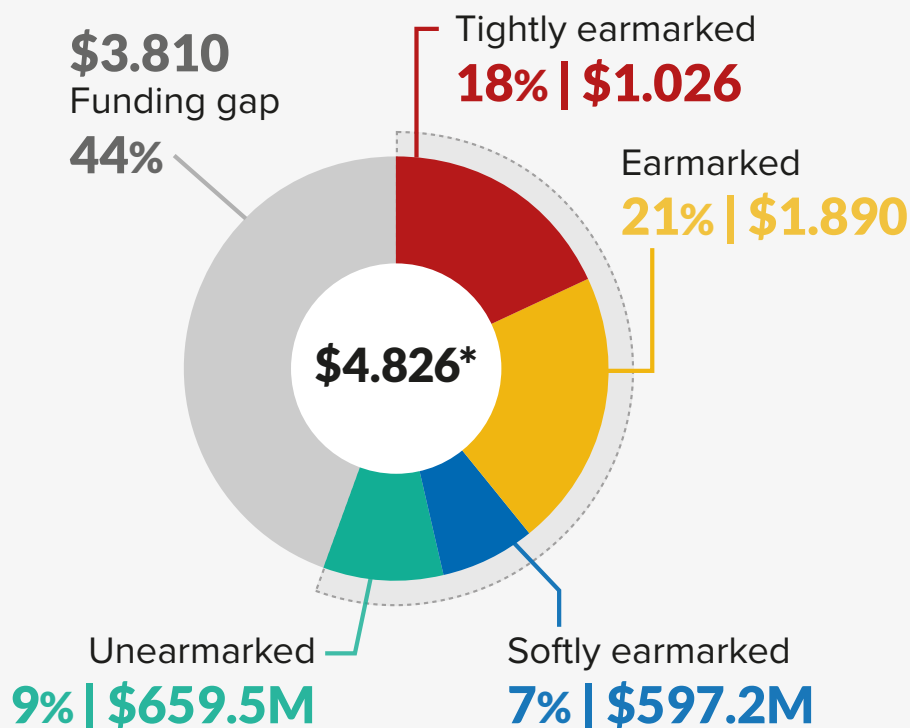


A young Afghan asylum-seeker peeps through the opening of a tent where she lives with her extended family inside what is known to locals as the Olive Grove, an improvised camp adjacent to the Moria Reception and Identification centre on the Greek island of Lesbos.

UNHCR's FLEXIBLE FUNDING

UNHCR's budget in 2019 grew to \$8.636 billion, and the funds available to it came to \$4.826 billion. That included \$4.174 billion in voluntary contributions from donors, of which \$1.257 billion, or 30%, was flexible—either unearmarked or softly earmarked funding.

FINAL BUDGET \$8.636 billion



* Funds available: contributions (voluntary contributions and UN Regular Budget); carry-over; other income and adjustments. Percentages above relate to funding against the total budget.

Unit: billion

Definitions

Softly earmarked funding

allows UNHCR to infuse resources across a range of countries and activities in a given region or situation, or a specific Pillar, theme or activity in accordance with identified priorities. UNHCR received \$597.2 million in softly earmarked funding, a decline of 21% from the \$754.6 million received in 2018.

Unearmarked funding

is contributed without restrictions on its use. It provides UNHCR with vital flexibility in determining how best to protect and assist refugees, internally displaced and stateless persons and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need or at the greatest risk. In 2019, unearmarked funding came to \$659.5 million from 91 donors. This included \$225 million, or 36%, from the private sector. Overall, this was an increase of nearly 7% on the \$617.4 million received in 2018. Some 56% of UNHCR's unearmarked funding was received in the first quarter of the year, a welcome demonstration of timeliness and providing the Office with invaluable support.

Multi-year contributions

are those which are pledged for 24 months or more. In 2019, \$542 million of the total funds available came from multi-year year contributions. These funds came from 19 governmental donors, 26 private donors, 14 United Nations funds, and 3 inter-governmental bodies. Multi-year contributions accounted for 11% of the total funds available in 2019, and of what was received, 41% of it was unearmarked. Whilst not all multi-year funding is flexible, the value of this type of contribution is its predictability, allowing UNHCR to apportion resources where they are needed most at the beginning of the year.

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