



**development
initiatives**

Global Humanitarian
Assistance



global humanitarian assistance report 2018

executive summary

foreword

Welcome to the *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2018*.

In 2017, conflicts and disasters around the world left an estimated 201 million people in need of the 'last resort' of international humanitarian assistance in order to cope and survive. The conflicts in Syria, Yemen and South Sudan continued to cause suffering and displacement for many millions of people. Meanwhile disasters in the Caribbean and droughts and food insecurity in the Horn of Africa devastated the lives and livelihoods of many more. Elsewhere, crises from Burundi to Ukraine continued to affect large populations but garner few international headlines.

It is now two years since the World Humanitarian Summit brought humanitarian donors, responders and affected people together to agree how crises need to be dealt with differently. Bold commitments were made to shift the financing model – to diversify the donor base, reduce need and improve efficiencies. Two years on, how are we measuring up? On the one hand, we are starting to see some important innovations gather momentum: a focus on insurance and anticipation, more funding for cash transfer programmes, and greater investments from multilateral development banks. On the other hand, we are seeing a slow-down in international humanitarian financing, inadequate long-term development funding, and little progress in supporting localisation.

Many of you are dealing with the difficult daily realities of how to advance these commitments and how to best spend increasingly constrained resources. To do this, you need accurate, transparent data and reliable analysis. In response, the Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) report has been presenting the most comprehensive available data in an independent, rigorous and accessible digest since 2000.

Each year we adapt and update the GHA report to respond to the feedback of our readers and to the changing context. So this year we are pleased to introduce a new approach – a concise presentation of the essential facts and figures that you need at your fingertips. This forms part of Development Initiatives' wider programme of humanitarian analysis, and we will be publishing in-depth research on pressing issues in crisis financing to accompany the GHA report over the coming year. This will be on cash programming, multi-year financing and demystifying the array of financial instruments and mechanisms used by humanitarians. All these will be available on our website.

As ever, we welcome your feedback on the report as well as your ideas on how we can further support your work. Improving the way the world prevents, prepares for and responds to the crises that affect the most vulnerable people remains a critical challenge. It is one we must approach collectively, with the best possible data and evidence to guide us – we look forward to continuing to be part of that effort.

Thank you for your interest.

Harpinder Collacott
Executive Director

humanitarian assistance in numbers

poverty and crisis risk*

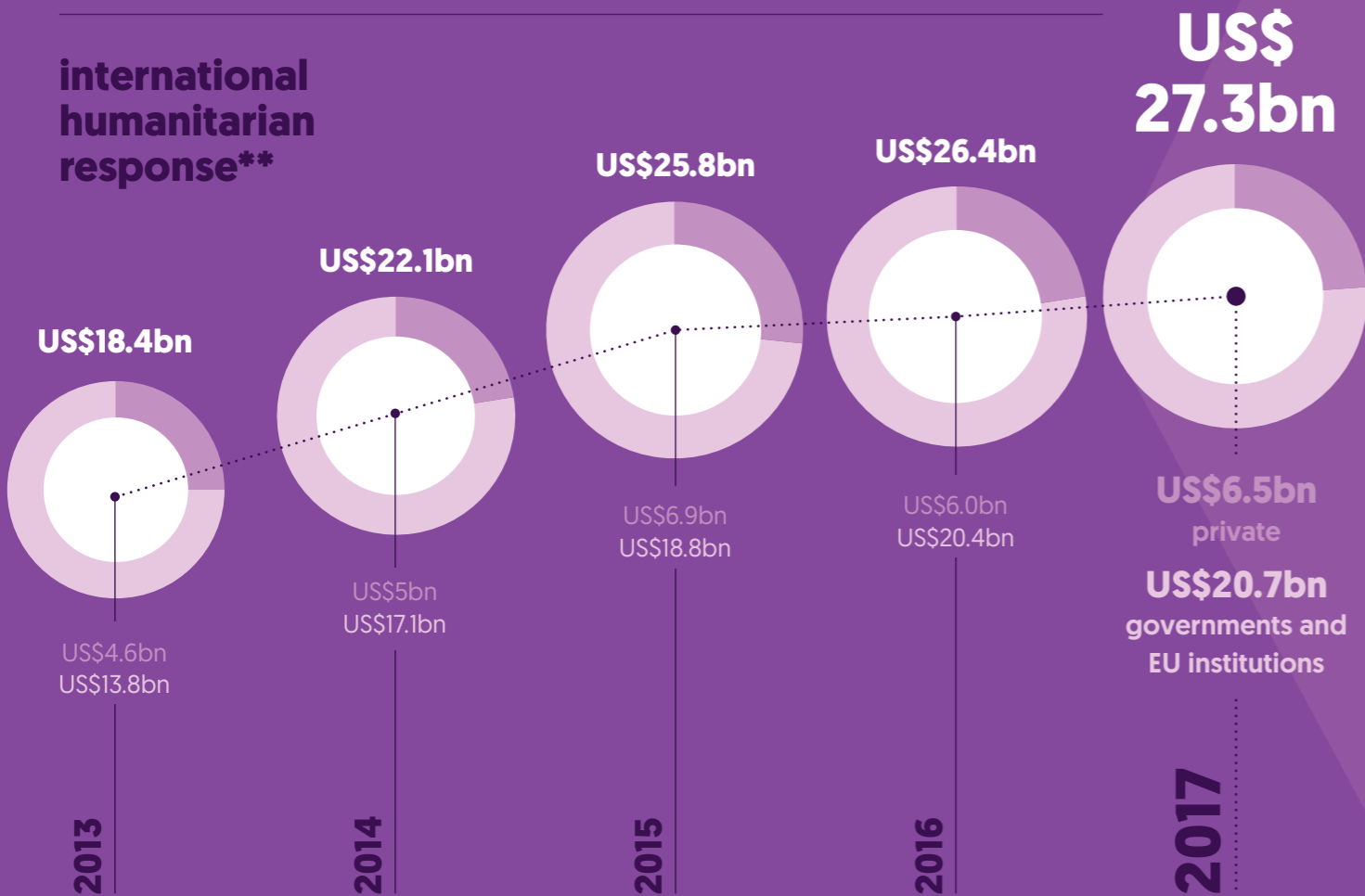
2bn poor people worldwide



753m of these are in extreme poverty



international humanitarian response**

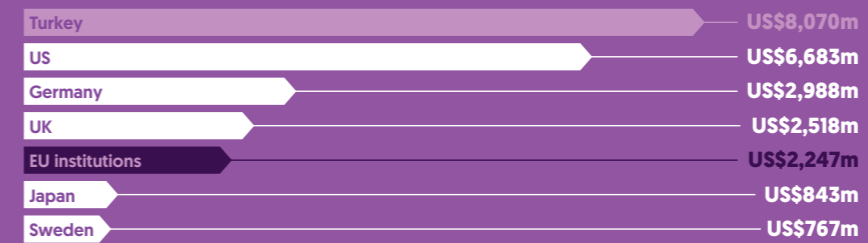


● private ● governments and EU institutions

Notes: *Poor people are defined as those living on less than \$3.20 a day, extreme poverty is defined as living on less than \$1.90 a day. **Data consists only of humanitarian assistance directed internationally by donors. ***Contributions of EU member states include an imputed amount of the EU institutions' expenditure. EU institutions are also included separately for comparison and are shaded differently to distinguish from government donors.

where does this come from?

donors, 2017 (largest by volume)***



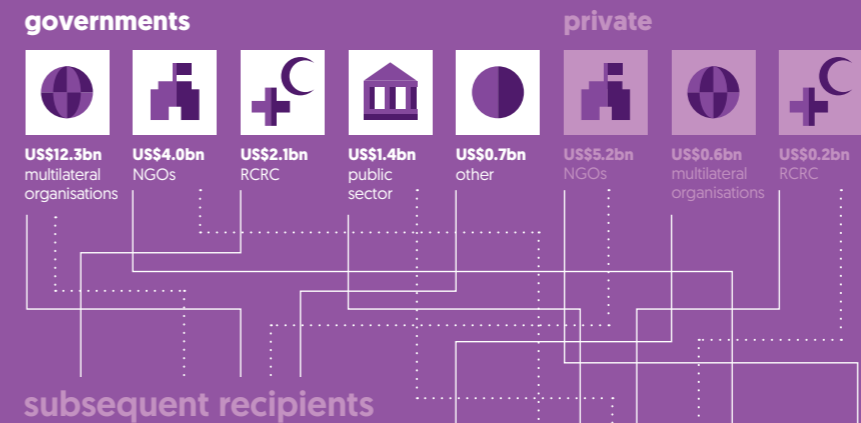
where is it going?

recipient countries, 2016 (largest by volume)



how does it get there?

first-level recipients



subsequent recipients



resource mix in the 20 countries receiving the most international humanitarian assistance, 2016

1.7% official humanitarian assistance



UN-coordinated appeals 2017

proportion of requirements met and unmet

41% shortfall

For sources and full notes see Figures 1.1, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1 and 4.1. Turkey is shaded differently because the humanitarian assistance it voluntarily reports to the DAC is largely comprised of expenditure on hosting Syrian refugees within Turkey so it is not strictly comparable with the international humanitarian assistance totals from other donors in this figure. Data for 2017 is preliminary.

executive summary

An estimated 201 million people in 134 countries needed international humanitarian assistance in 2017, a fifth of whom were in just three countries – Syria, Yemen and Turkey. A small number of complex crises continue to absorb the majority of humanitarian assistance – 60% of all assistance was channelled to 10 countries only, with 14% going to Syria, the largest recipient, and 8% to Yemen, the second-largest.

Conflict continues to feature as a main contributor to humanitarian need. Syria was the single largest recipient of humanitarian assistance for the fifth consecutive year, while Greece and Turkey featured among the 10 largest recipients of international humanitarian assistance for the first time.

A complex dynamic between poverty, environmental vulnerability and fragility continues to affect significant numbers of poor people. Of the 753 million people living in extreme poverty, 59% were living in countries affected by either fragility, environmental vulnerability or both. While some countries have shown improved capacity to cope with shocks, the lack of subnational data masks significant local variations in community resilience.

International humanitarian assistance remains a critical resource to meet the needs of people affected by crisis, and 2017 saw a record US\$27.3 billion allocated to humanitarian responses. Yet the slowed growth in 2016 continued into 2017, with a 3% increase for the second consecutive year. A growth of just 1.4% from governments and EU institutions was offset by an increase of 9% in estimated contributions from private donors in 2017.

A greater proportion of official development assistance (ODA) is being spent as humanitarian assistance. Although both show an upward trend from 2007, the level of humanitarian assistance within overall ODA is growing faster (at 124% since 2007) than overall ODA (at 41% since 2007). Increased volumes of humanitarian assistance to the 20 largest recipients have not been matched by investments of non-humanitarian ODA.

Although there were two fewer UN-coordinated appeals (41) in 2017 than in 2016, the amount requested reached a high of US\$25.2 billion, driven by ongoing crises in Syria, Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria and new large appeals in Ethiopia and Pakistan. These appeals saw a record response of US\$14.9 billion, but also a funding shortfall of US\$10.3 billion (41% of requirements), the largest to date.

A small number of donor governments continue to contribute the majority of international humanitarian assistance. The three largest donors accounted for 59% of all government contributions. International humanitarian assistance contributions from European governments plateaued after a sharp rise in 2016 but still made up 53% of total government funding. Contributions from the Middle East and North of Sahara region continued to fall for a second consecutive year – by a further 30% from 2016. Estimated funding from private donors – individuals, trusts, foundations and corporations – grew by around 9%. Individual giving remains the single largest source of private donations, though those from trusts and foundations are growing.

Humanitarian assistance reaches people in need via multiple channels and transaction chains. In 2016, US\$12.3 billion or 60% of all direct government funding went to multilateral agencies (primarily UN agencies) in the first instance. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) received US\$4.0 billion directly – 20% of the total. A growing majority of this went to international NGOs who received 94% of all funding to NGOs in 2017, up from 85% in 2016. There was a slight increase in direct funding to national and local NGOs, from 1.7% of all NGO funding in 2016 to 2.7% in 2017. But local and national NGOs received just 0.4% directly of all international humanitarian assistance reported to FTS in 2017, a rise of just 0.1% from 2016. Improved reporting, with lower volumes of funding being categorised as ‘undefined’, may in part explain the changes seen in 2017.

Funding volumes through the flexible funding mechanisms termed pooled funds continue to grow, reaching a record total of US\$1.3 billion in 2017. Within this, funding for both the Central Emergency Response Fund and the 18 country-based pooled funds grew by 18% and 10% respectively. Unearmarked funds allow agencies to anticipate and respond to changing needs. However, self-reporting by nine UN agencies suggests that although the volume of unearmarked funds is increasing, it is not growing as a share of the total.

Given the number of protracted crises and that 17 of the 20 largest recipients of international humanitarian assistance in 2017 were either long-term or medium-term recipients, adaptable multi-year planning and funding is essential. Consistent and comparable data on multi-year funding remains unavailable, but a review of UN-coordinated appeals suggests an increase in the volume of requirements for multi-year appeals despite a reduction in their number. The Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) accounted for 55% of total multi-year requirements.

Cash transfer programming can enable recipients of humanitarian assistance to choose how best to meet their needs. An estimated US\$2.8 billion of international humanitarian assistance was allocated to this in 2016, a 40% increase from 2015.

Greater transparency of the financing flows to humanitarian crises is important to enable coherent responses and to identify gaps. Grand Bargain signatories committed to publish “timely transparent harmonised and open high-quality data”. By the end of 2017, 73% of Grand Bargain signatories were publishing open data to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) Standard, and 85% of these were publishing data on their humanitarian activities.

Development Initiatives is an independent international development organisation that focuses on the role of data in driving poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Our vision is a world without poverty that invests in human security and where everyone shares the benefits of opportunity and growth.

Our mission is to ensure that decisions about the allocation of finance and resources result in an end to poverty, increase the resilience of the world's most vulnerable people, and ensure no one is left behind. We work to make sure these decisions are underpinned by good quality, transparent data and evidence on poverty and resources, and lead to increased accountability and sustainable long-term outcomes.

Our Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) project analyses resource flows to people at risk of and affected by crises, promoting data transparency and access to information through our research and publications – including our annual GHA reports. This content is solely the work of Development Initiatives and represents our analysis and interpretation of the available data. For further details on the content of this report, and to ask questions or provide comments to its authors, please contact us by email (gha@devinit.org) or visit our website.

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Sverige

Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) reports use the latest data to present the most comprehensive assessment of the international financing at work in humanitarian situations. The *GHA Report 2018* explores the links between poverty, risk and crisis, and examines the resources directed to those experiencing crises.

In a complex and changing financing landscape, it provides clear and independent analysis of: how much is given, who it is provided by, where it goes, how it is delivered and how it can more effectively meet people's needs. Transparent and reliable information, as provided by the *GHA Report 2018*, is essential for all those working to address the causes and consequences of crises. The 2018 edition of this annual report includes updated analysis on Grand Bargain commitments and new analysis on the Global Concessional Financing Facility.

This is a summary of the *GHA Report 2018*. Please visit our website to download and read the full report and other relevant analysis. To ask questions or provide comments please contact us by email (gha@devinit.org). We welcome your feedback.



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