

Annex 3: Results in humanitarian and fragile contexts, 2019

Integrated midterm review and progress report on implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2018-2021



Young girl listens to a community public information session on the dangers of child marriage in Chad, focusing on the rights, safety and dignity for women and girls fleeing from Boko Haram attack. Photo/UNFPA/Ollivier Girard

A fragile world, especially for women and girls

The period 2018-2019 was another challenging time for people whose lives have been upended by conflict, extreme climate events, pandemics and displacement.

While 2019 humanitarian needs were expected to be similar to 2018, this was not the case. Humanitarian needs increased significantly, largely fueled by climatic shocks and protracted and worsening conflicts. For the first time in four years, the number of highly violent conflicts rose in 2019. There were about 41 active violent conflicts reported at the beginning of that year, compared to 36 at the beginning of 2018. The number of refugees has been growing for seven consecutive years, reaching a new high of 25.9 million at the start of 2019. More people are being forcibly displaced and the displacements are lasting longer.¹

¹ Global Humanitarian Overview 2020 (page 11-13): <https://www.unocha.org/global-humanitarian-overview-2020>



As of early 2019, nearly 71 million people had been forcibly displaced from their homes by armed conflict, violence or human rights violations. A staggering 136 million people needed humanitarian assistance in 2018 and this number rose to over 138 million in 2019.²

Of the total affected populations in 2018 and 2019, UNFPA estimates show that 34 percent are women of reproductive age and 5 million of them are pregnant.

Women and girls continue to pay a high price in conflicts. They face heightened risk for maternal morbidity and mortality, and gender-based violence. An estimated 1 in 3 women worldwide will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime, with this risk increasing during emergencies. This includes rape, sexual exploitation and trafficking, and forced, child or early marriage. About 9 out of 10 ten countries with the highest rates of child marriage are fragile³.

In 2019, the high level-conference in Oslo on Ending Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Humanitarian Crisis galvanized unprecedented support for global action. Hosted by Norway, Iraq, Somalia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNFPA, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other partners, the historic conference mobilized political will and financial pledges to accelerate the drive to stop gender-based violence in conflicts and disasters.

The COVID-19 pandemic constitutes the largest global public health crisis in a century and the health and socio-economic challenges are daunting. The situation is particularly concerning for countries already facing challenges with weaker health systems and in delivering basic social services. Access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health services will be further disrupted, as well as services to address gender-based violence, especially in countries facing humanitarian crises.

Fundamentally, the 2030 Agenda depends on ending preventable maternal deaths, the unmet need for family planning, and gender-based violence and harmful practices, including in countries struck by humanitarian crises. Analysis launched at the 2019 Nairobi Summit, to mark the 25th anniversary of the ICPD, demonstrated that reaching these goals in priority countries would require \$264 billion. If such an investment is not made, the costs will be incalculably greater, in financial terms as well as human suffering.

Action and results on ground

Millions of women and girls affected by emergencies worldwide continue to rely on UNFPA for help; from Bangladesh and Yemen, to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, to those fleeing Venezuela. UNFPA and its partners supported health facilities and workers to provide emergency obstetric and neonatal care. It addressed gender-based violence and harmful practices through safe spaces and facilities, where women and girls can find services and information and receive mental health and psychosocial support. Mental health and psychosocial support services are increasingly operating in tandem with services related to gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health.

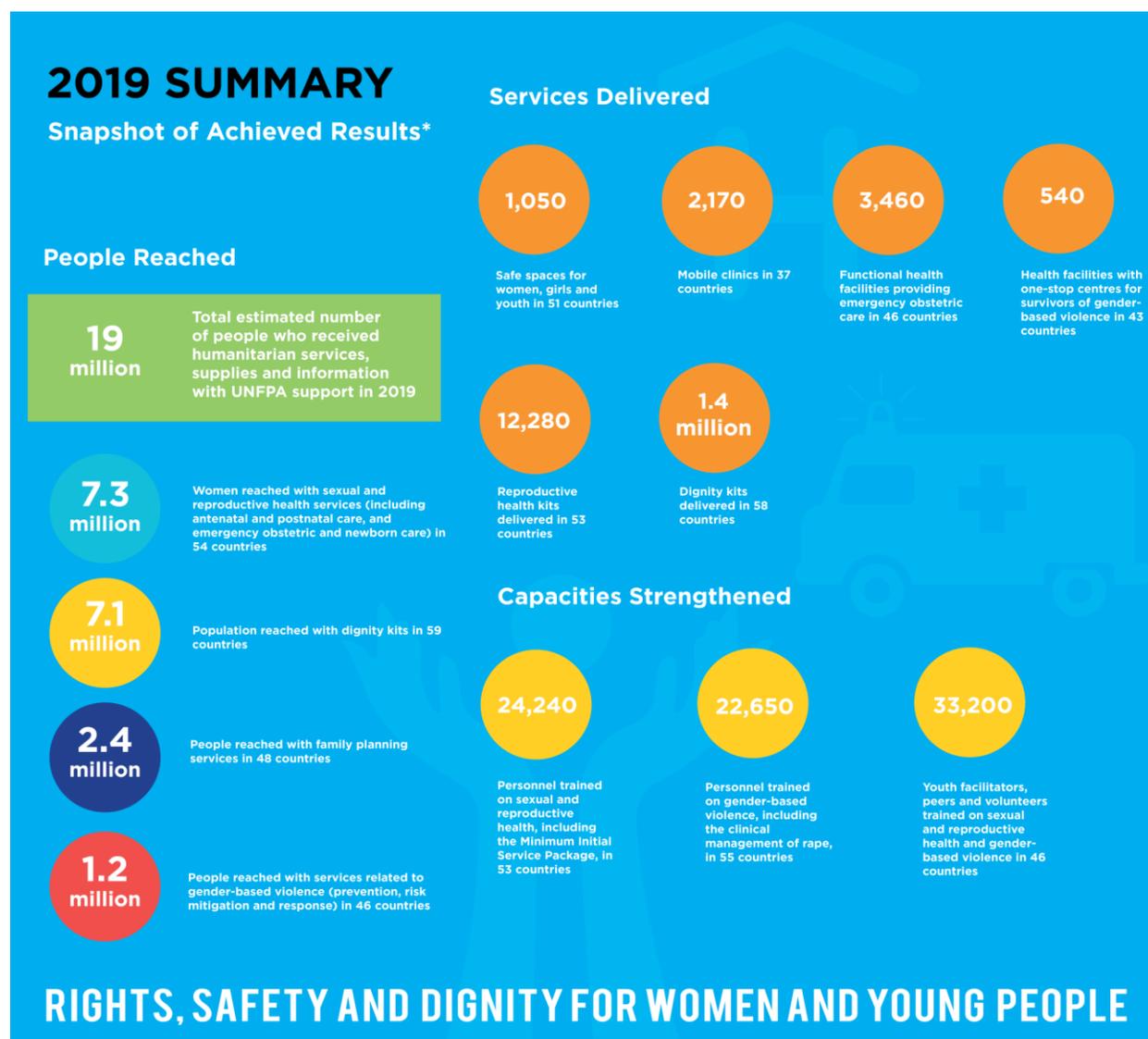
² Global Humanitarian Overview 2020 (page 11-13): <https://www.unocha.org/global-humanitarian-overview-2020>

³ Global Humanitarian Overview 2020 (page 15): <https://www.unocha.org/global-humanitarian-overview-2020>

In 2019, UNFPA humanitarian assistance reached over 19 million people in 64 countries. Around 7.3 million women were provided with full range of maternal, newborn and comprehensive reproductive health care services (in accordance with national policies and legislation) including antenatal and postnatal care, emergency obstetric and newborn care, and clinical management of rape. Over 2.4 million people obtained modern contraceptives. (See table 1)

For decades, UNFPA has provided safe spaces where women and young people can be free from harm; find care, services and information; and gain skills empowering them to make choices to advance their own safety and well-being. In addition, UNFPA promotes the “one stop centre” model for survivors of gender-based violence so that women and girls do not have to travel to multiple sites, face stigma or retell their experiences multiple times. One stop centres provide comprehensive care within one location. In 2019, a total of 540 health facilities, supported by UNFPA in 43 countries, had one-stop centres for survivors of gender-based violence.

Table 1: 2019 Results Snapshot



* Results are estimated as November 2019 and are updated on the UNFPA website as they become available.

A snapshot of global support in 2019

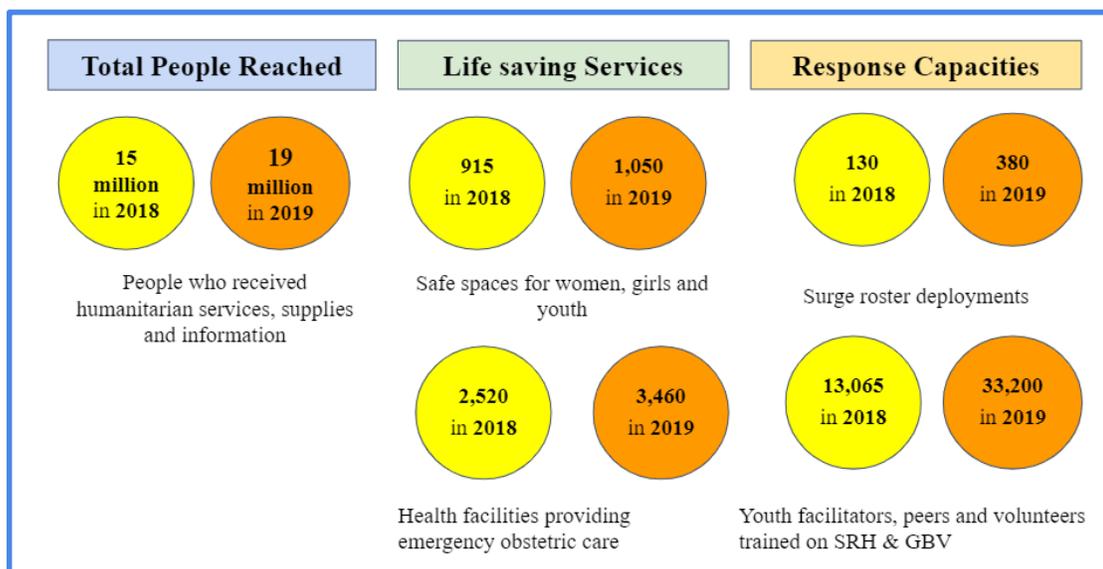
UNFPA coordinates humanitarian action at global, regional and country levels. Country offices are backstopped by six regional offices. Support from headquarters encompasses human resources, procurement, resource mobilization, standards and policies, and advocacy, among other measures.

In 2019, UNFPA established its new Humanitarian Office to coordinate institutional humanitarian action and meet the rising needs of affected women, girls and young people. In a world where humanitarian situations are increasingly complex, the Humanitarian Office supports focused and effective humanitarian action through a dedicated staffing structure in Geneva (director's office, inter-agency and external coordination, response and technical support, and operations) and New York (policy, advocacy and communications, and financing). As one of the headquarters divisions, the Humanitarian Office reports directly to the Executive Director.

The UNFPA global support achieved the following in 2019:

- Procured and delivered supplies worth \$19.4 million to 53 countries to support life-saving emergency obstetric and newborn care, clinical management of rape, voluntary family planning, and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections.
- Expanded the surge roster from 130 deployments in 2018 to 380 by the end of 2019.
- Trained 600 humanitarian actors on the case management of gender-based violence, clinical management of rape, psychosocial support, and gender-based violence-related programming and mainstreaming. To provide the training, a specialized, three-member roving global emergency response team undertook 226 mission days across 19 countries.
- Led the global area of responsibility on gender-based violence, which coordinated work in 35 humanitarian settings. The year saw the launch of the Revised Handbook for Coordinating gender-based violence Interventions in Emergencies: a quick reference tool for practical, field-level guidance to establish and maintain a gender-based violence sub cluster.
- Led development of the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming, launched with partners in November 2019.
- Supported 23 countries in establishing information management systems for gender-based violence. Through the safe and ethical collection and use of service provision data, the systems strengthen case management. The first inter-agency launches of "Primero/gender-based information management system (GBVIMS+) took place in Bangladesh, Libya and Nigeria.
- Disbursed \$10 million from the UNFPA Emergency Fund to 32 UNFPA country offices and two regional and sub-regional offices. The fund supports offices to respond as soon as a humanitarian crisis strikes, before donor resources are available, and helps manage underfunded emergencies.

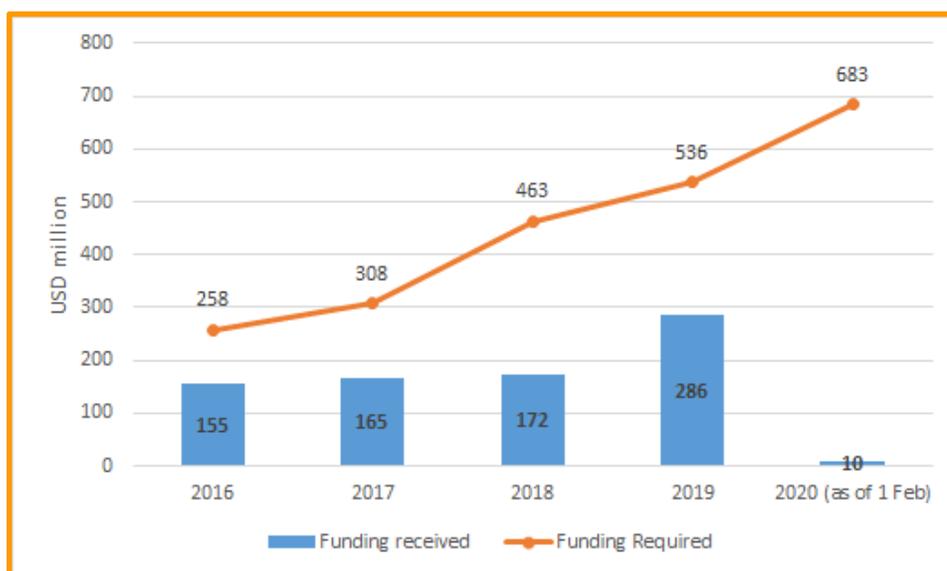
Table 2: 2018 and 2019 Results Snapshot



Results achieved were made possible by the growing humanitarian revenue from donors in response to a range of critical and underfunded emergencies (See table 3). In 2018, UNFPA also launched its Humanitarian Action Thematic Fund, which allows the organization to flexibly respond to existing and emerging needs while reducing transaction costs and improving the efficiency of UNFPA operations to save more lives.

UNFPA’s top ten sources of humanitarian revenue in 2019 included: United Nations (includes Central Emergency Response Fund and Country-based Pooled Funds); Canada; European Commission; United Kingdom; Denmark; Norway; Sweden; Japan; Australia; and Netherlands.

Table 3: Humanitarian Revenue 2016-2020





In addition, UNFPA is mobilizing resources to address COVID-19 and is part of the UN coordinated [global humanitarian appeal](#) launched in March 2020 to assist some of the world's most vulnerable countries.

UNFPA COVID-19 has touched every corner of the globe and infections are rising daily in every region. The pandemic constitutes the largest global public health crisis in a century and the health and socio-economic challenges are daunting.

Some of the challenges facing humanitarian action for women and girls

The average humanitarian crisis now lasts more than nine years, driven by conflict and climate action. Without lasting peace, the needs of women, girls, men and boys have been increasing year by year.

For humanitarian action to fully align with human rights and gender equality principles, it must provide integrated services for sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence prevention and response, and mental health and psychosocial support. Each of these services is essential. Together they respond to the many core needs of women and girls as well as men and boys affected by crises.

Yet, these issues are still not at the forefront of humanitarian action like food or shelter. Some governments have continued to push back on these rights, hindering gender equality and women's empowerment, and failing to address gender-based violence and harmful practices.

The work of providing sexual and reproductive (SRH) services, and of preventing and responding to gender-based violence is significantly underfunded. Of \$2.5 billion contributed to inter-agency health and protection sectors in 2016, 12% funded SRH activities⁴. According to global humanitarian funding data reported in OCHA's financial tracking system in 2016, 2017 and 2018, funding for gender-based violence (GBV) accounted for just 0.12 per cent of all humanitarian funding – which represents one third of funding requested for GBV.

Another major challenge is the high turnover of both implementing partners and UNFPA personnel, which has a negative impact on access, needs assessments, service provision and monitoring. In many fragile and humanitarian settings, many things are unpredictable: this includes the security context, displacements and movement of people. Both community and humanitarian workers have become a target during conflict.

Furthermore, UNFPA is facing many challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes finding new resources and increasing capacities to implement ongoing and new programmes (including disaster preparedness, and timely procurement and delivery of much-needed personal protective equipment, emergency reproductive health kits, medicines, commodities and supplies).

Priorities for 2020 and going forward

⁴ http://interactive.unocha.org/publication/datatrends2017/resources/WHDT2017_Final_Singles.pdf



While the challenges are many, and the needs urgent, many of the solutions are clear. Women, girls and young people are among our best hopes of driving peace, prosperity and progress. UNFPA actively supports the engagement of young people and women in building peace and transforming social norms to uphold gender equality and more inclusive societies. Their active participation in public life is one of the strongest indicators of long term development, peace and security.

The unprecedented consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic will impact access to lifesaving sexual and reproductive health services and response to gender-based violence at a time when women and girls need these services the most. UNFPA will work to support governments and partners to prioritize these services, particularly in humanitarian and fragile settings.

UNFPA's global humanitarian action will be guided by the following three priorities:

- **Preparedness and prepositioning:** To ensure, through better use of data and evidence, that anticipatory action reduces delays in delivering emergency reproductive health supplies to people in need. UNFPA is continuing to review its corporate approach on preparedness for supplies, including where necessary regional stockpiling and national prepositioning.
- **Leadership:** To increase the effectiveness, efficiency and capacity of UNFPA staff and partners in leading advances in sexual and reproductive health services, the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, wherever it may occur. In partnership with national and local organizations, including local women's organizations and youth groups, we will strengthen accountability to people affected by humanitarian crises. UNFPA will work across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus to address protracted conflicts and the climate crisis.
- **Operational capacity:** To strengthen operations, data, financing and advocacy, including by institutionalizing a surge mechanism and human resources management linked to humanitarian response, upholding a coherent approach to humanitarian financing and continuously improving supply chain Management. There is a need for a comprehensive plan to increase humanitarian expertise across the organisation. This includes a plan for ensuring gender-based violence sub-clusters are resourced equivalent to other clusters with well-capacitated coordinators and technical support.

The ultimate goal is to strengthen impact on the ground and leave no one behind. Without UNFPA and its dedicated partners, the urgent and unique needs of millions of women and adolescent girls would go unmet. Sustained support helps UNFPA to keep women and girls at the forefront of humanitarian action.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the dignity and protection of women and girls are not negotiable.
