

# Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance

COMMUNITY REQUEST FY 2020

# \$1 M

FY 2020 President's Request: N/A  
FY 2019 Enacted: \$1 Million

## DESCRIPTION

Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) is an emergency presidential draw-down account that provides an important safety valve during emergencies, allowing the U.S. to meet rapidly occurring and unforeseen humanitarian needs.

## WHAT DOES THIS BUY?

ERMA investments provide life-sustaining assistance to refugees, including food, shelter, health care, and education.

## JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REQUEST

- Conflict or persecution forcibly displaces nearly one person every two seconds (both internally displaced persons and refugees), amounting to over 68.5 million people worldwide.
- As a Presidential draw-down account, this funding enables the U.S. to **meet rapidly occurring and unforeseen humanitarian needs** by Presidential certification and provides an important safety valve during emergencies.
- U.S. funding helps to meet the basic human needs of displaced people, supports permanent solutions to their displacement, and assists the countries hosting them. The United States thereby helps to relieve pressures that have the potential to destabilize regions that also threaten global stability and security.
- Recent years have seen unanticipated needs arise in countries such as Bangladesh, Mali, South Sudan, Sudan, and Syria. These countries are often ill-equipped to handle massive in-flows of people; therefore, the United States and other global partners buttress political and humanitarian responses.

**Displacement happens every 2 seconds.**

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## U.S. INTEREST

The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings. Humanitarian actors must remain neutral, not taking sides in hostilities or engaging in controversies of a political, racial, religious, or ideological nature. Humanitarian action must be based on need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class, or political affiliations. Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military, or other objectives that any actor may hold regarding areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.<sup>1</sup>



# Looking to the Future

## Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance – TITLE III

### BOLD VISION

Additional investments could allow the U.S. to better respond to the unprecedented scope of the global refugee crisis.

### IMPACT OF CUTS

- Cuts would create a vacuum in funding for urgent situations, deprive the Department of State of a critical diplomatic and regional security tool, and prevent the U.S. from acting to achieve the most effective and efficient results in humanitarian responses.
- Increasingly, new and unpredictable crises flare up, requiring an urgent, flexible response across several sectors, as seen in the Rohingya crisis in 2017 and the Guji-Gedeo conflict in Ethiopia in 2018. Cuts could delay the provision of funds, resulting in life-and-death consequences.

<sup>1</sup> “OCHA on Message: Humanitarian Principles, June 2012,” United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. [https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples\\_eng\\_June12.pdf](https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf).

### 5 YEAR FUNDING HISTORY

