

Analysis of international aid levels for early childhood services in crisis contexts: **Key insights**

December 2020

Read the full report online at MovingMindsAlliance.org/ECDiE-Funding-Analysis



The first years of a child’s life are a critical window of opportunity for optimal development, laying the foundations for learning, behaviour and well-being later in life.

Young children growing up in crisis settings are vulnerable to a range of compounding risks that threaten their long-term development and well-being. Evidence shows that quality early childhood services for young children and their caregivers can provide a buffer against these risks and help children reach their developmental potential.

Despite the growing need for investment in early childhood development in emergencies (ECDiE), no methodology currently exists to track and report on donor commitments and funding. This report aims to help fill that gap by estimating funding going to ECDiE in recent years.

Using a two-track methodology, the analysis draws insights from:



Development aid to countries affected by crisis



Humanitarian aid explicitly targeting early childhood interventions

The two-track logic builds upon growing interest in the humanitarian-development nexus, which may offer new potential funding sources for ECDiE.

While the findings from these two tracks cannot be aggregated, they provide different sets of insights, which stakeholders and advocates can use to make the case for increasing investment in services for young children and caregivers affected by crisis.

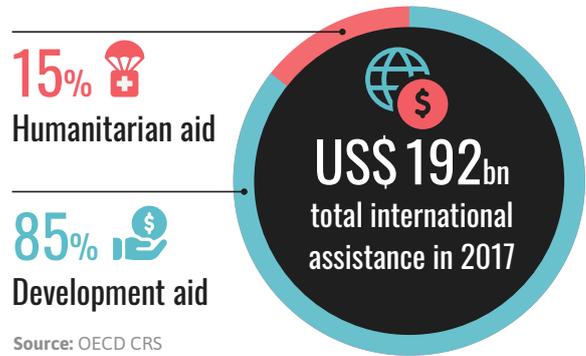
This report is a first attempt to estimate current global funding levels towards early childhood development in crisis settings. To better understand the extent to which children and their caregivers in crisis-affected contexts are supported to survive and thrive, donors, decision-makers and advocates should push for increased transparency on, and traceability of, funding for ECDiE. Finally, while this report provides initial insights on current funding levels, the funding need—and thus the extent of the gap—is still unknown. An overarching funding goal for ECDiE needs globally—based on scenario planning informed by the findings of this analysis—is being developed by the Moving Minds Alliance and its partners.

Despite the growing need for investment in early childhood development in emergencies, no methodology currently exists to track and report on donor commitments and funding.

Key insights:

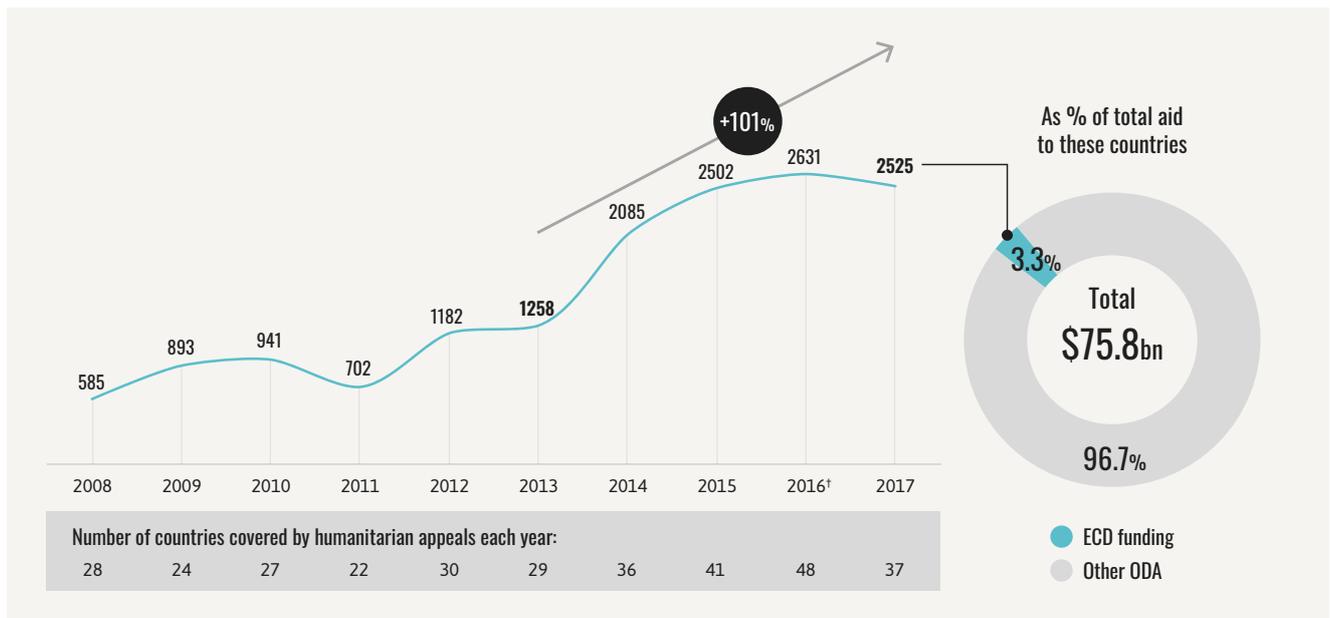
Development funding

Development aid is an important source of financing for ECDiE. Development aid represented 85% of all international assistance in 2017. A growing share goes to countries covered by Humanitarian Response Plans or Refugee Response Plans: 44% of all Official Development Assistance (ODA) for early childhood development—US\$ 2.5 billion in 2017—went to countries affected by crisis.



While the absolute amount of funding has increased, the share of development aid for ECDiE is consistently low. Even if the total amount of early childhood development (ECD) funding in crisis-affected countries is rising (up from US\$ 1.3 billion in 2013), it represents only 3.3% of total development aid going to crisis-affected countries in 2017 (up marginally from 2.7% in 2013).

Development aid for ECD in crisis-affected countries,* US\$ millions



Source: SEEK Development estimates. *Crisis-affected countries are countries covered by a humanitarian appeal or refugee response plan in a given year (including regional plans). †2016 includes countries covered by regional appeals for Europe Situation and for the Sahel (see Annex 3).

Trends suggest a growing role for multilateral organisations as funders of ECDiE. While traditional bilateral donors are responsible for 49% of development funding for ECDiE, the share of funding from multilaterals has risen from 39% in 2013 to 51% in 2017. The World Bank leads the way, contributing 11% of all development funding for ECDiE in 2017—a significant increase from just 4% in 2013.

Since 2013
multilateral
funding is up
12%

Development aid for ECD in crisis-affected countries, by type of provider, 2017, US\$ millions



Source: SEEK Development estimates

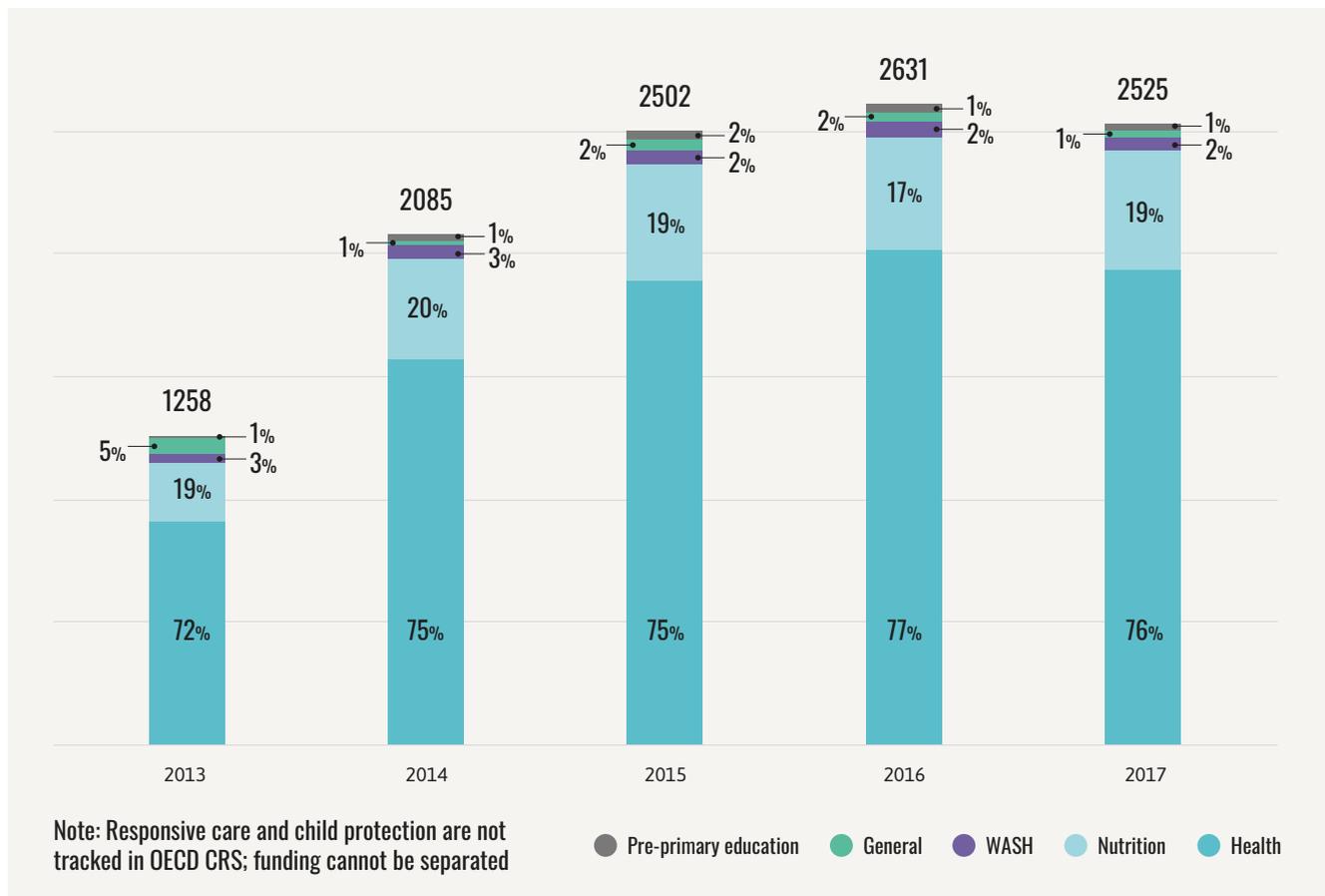
Integrating missing ECDiE elements into already funded health and nutrition programs is an effective way to increase access for young children and caregivers in the near term.

In crisis-affected countries, 95% of development aid consistently goes to health and nutrition interventions. Although these interventions already serve the target audience for ECDiE, they often neglect critical services, such as caregiver coaching and mental health support. Integrating elements of ECDiE into these well-established sectors could be an expedient approach to increasing coverage, while also addressing unmet needs.

Education and WASH services for children under 5 years old are severely underfunded; for child protection and responsive caregiving interventions, information on funding is unavailable.

Only 2% of ECD funding for crisis-affected countries goes to WASH, and only 1% to pre-primary education. Responsive caregiving and child protection—two critical elements of nurturing care and ECDiE—are not traceable in existing datasets. More precise tagging of funding for children under 5 years old would help improve tracking of resources going to these areas.

Development aid for ECD in crisis-affected countries, by sector, US\$ millions



Source: SEEK Development estimates

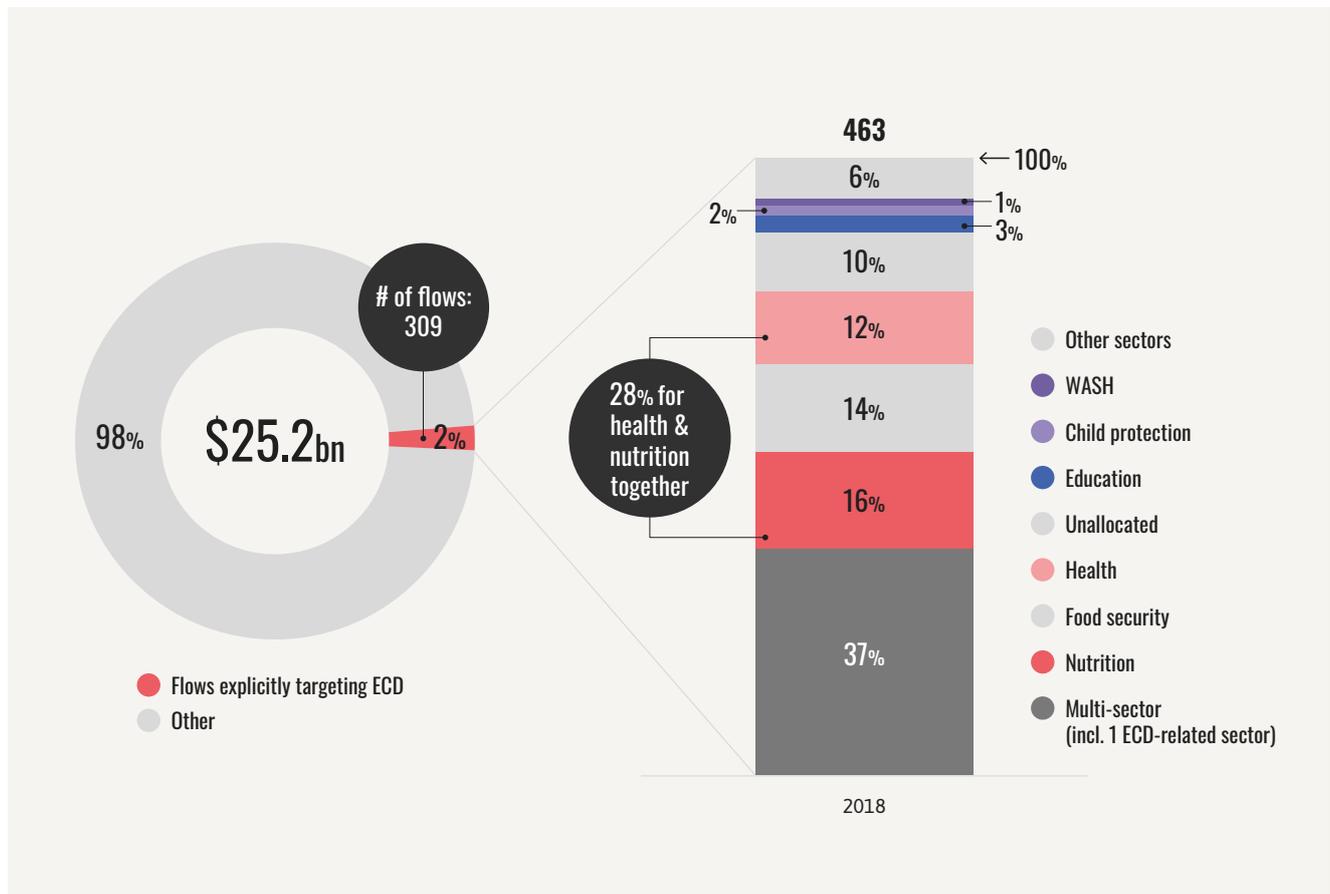
Key insights:

Humanitarian funding

At just 2%, the share of humanitarian aid supporting ECDiE is minimal. Humanitarian aid explicitly targeting ECD stood at US\$ 463 million in 2018, only 2% of the total. This excludes two private foundation grants of US\$ 100 million each awarded to ECDiE projects in 2018 (to be disbursed over five years), suggesting that philanthropy has played a growing role in humanitarian financing for ECDiE in recent years.

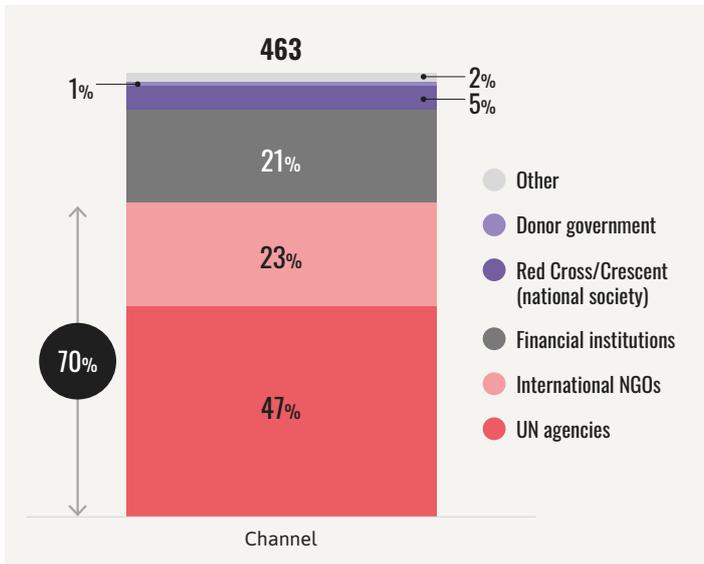


Humanitarian aid flows explicitly mentioning ECD interventions, by sector, 2018, US\$ millions



Source: SEEK Development estimates

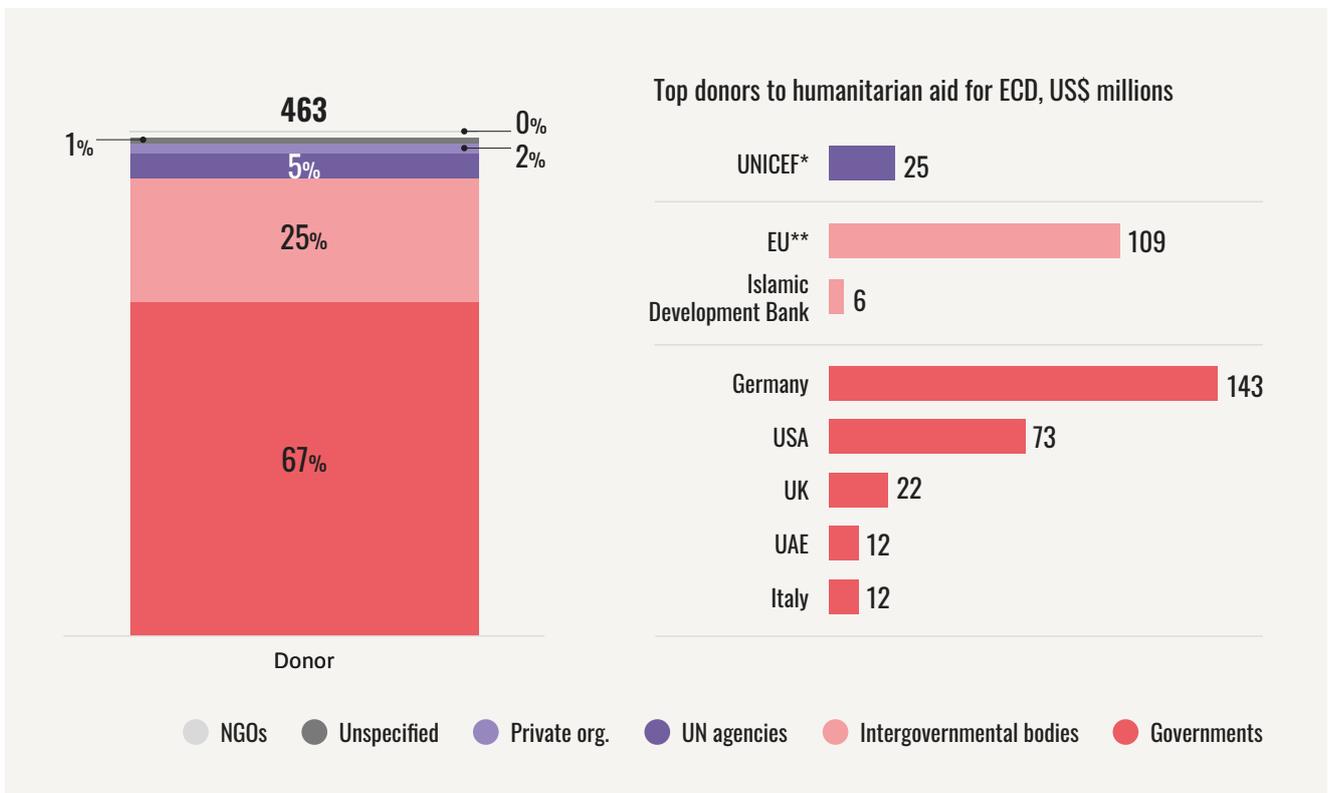
Humanitarian aid flows explicitly mentioning ECD interventions, by channel, 2018, US\$ millions



Together, three bilateral donors and the EU provided 75% of all ECDiE funding in 2018. Germany (US\$ 143 million), the United States (US\$ 73 million), the United Kingdom (US\$ 22 million) and the European Union (US\$ 109 million) are also the largest donors to the humanitarian sector overall. UNICEF, the UN agency focused on children, contributed US\$ 25 million (5%) to ECDiE.

Source: SEEK Development estimates

Humanitarian aid flows explicitly mentioning ECD interventions, by donor, 2018, US\$ millions

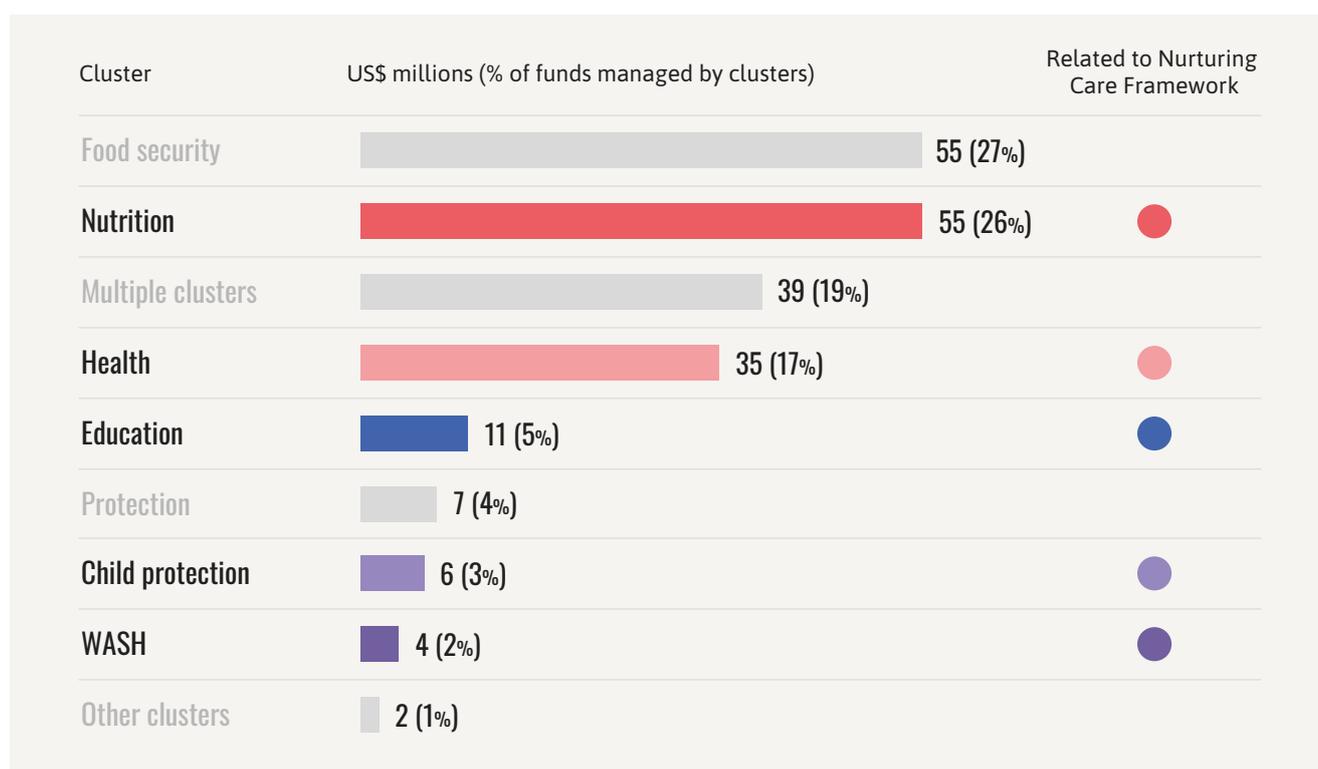


Source: SEEK Development estimates. *This represents the portion of UNICEF funding (22%) that is not attributed to a specific donor, and so is reported as originating directly from UNICEF. The original source of these funds is not known. **EU funding includes both ECHO and the European Commission.

Within the humanitarian cluster system, most humanitarian funds for ECDiE go to food security and nutrition. Education, WASH and child protection all manage less than 5%. Food security and nutrition manage US\$ 55 million each, or a combined 53% of total cluster funds for ECDiE. Four other clusters with direct relevance to ECDiE manage 27%: health (17%), education (5%), child protection (3%) and WASH (2%).

Coordination of funds across clusters to meet the needs of children under 5 years old is limited. Less than one-fifth of ECDiE funds (19%) is reported as 'multi-sector' funding (i.e., including at least one ECD-related sector, such as health, nutrition or education).

Humanitarian aid flows explicitly mentioning ECD interventions, by cluster, 2018, US\$ millions*



Source: SEEK Development estimates. *Only includes flows reported under a specific cluster, i.e., 45% of total humanitarian aid explicitly targeting ECD, for a total of US\$ 207 million.

Read the full report online at MovingMindsAlliance.org/ECDiE-Funding-Analysis

Developed by: SEEK Development, Strategic and Organizational Consultants GmbH, Cotheniusstraße 3, 10407 Berlin, Germany

SEEK DEVELOPMENT

© Moving Minds Alliance 2020. The Moving Minds Alliance is a restricted fund under the auspices of Prism the Gift Fund, Registered Charity No. 1099682.

