

Analysis of funding for Child Protection in Regional Refugee Response Plans in 2023

This analysis was prepared with the support of Save the Children, as co-lead of the Advocacy Working Group of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

Introduction

Latest figures speak of 114 million refugees and displaced people around the world¹ with brutal conflict continuing to be the main driver. Children, who account for 30% of the world's population, make up 40% of all forcibly displaced people and disproportionately bear the brunt of forced displacement.²

Unprecedented numbers of refugee children face risks of family separation, child labour, child marriage and other forms of abuse, exploitation and violence. Children have a right to be protected from violence. Yet for too many refugee children, such adverse childhood experiences have immediate and for some lifelong consequences.

Despite the urgency, the world is not keeping pace with the increasing protection needs for refugee children. Child protection is essential and lifesaving and a core component of refugee protection responses around the world.



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Global evidence continues to build that:

- Child protection risks in refugee settings are **predictable**
- Violence against children is **preventable**
- Solutions required to keep children safe are **within our reach**

¹ See *High Commissioner for Refugees Statement to UN Security Council*

² *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022 (UNHCR); Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020 (UNHCR); GRID 2023: Internal displacement and food security (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre/Norwegian Refugee Council, 2023)*



Governments, civil society and the UN collectively know how to keep refugee children safe and prevent harm. To do so effectively, these actors require sustained, predictable funding. Our analysis shows that in refugee response, there remains a major funding gap for crucial child protection services – in September 2023, child protection was funded at over 24.2%. This reflects an overall significant gap in funding refugee responses – the overall refugee response was funded at just under 20%. This also indicates that within available funding, child protection is prioritised in refugee responses (since the funding gap for child protection is slightly lower than the overall funding gap for the refugee responses).

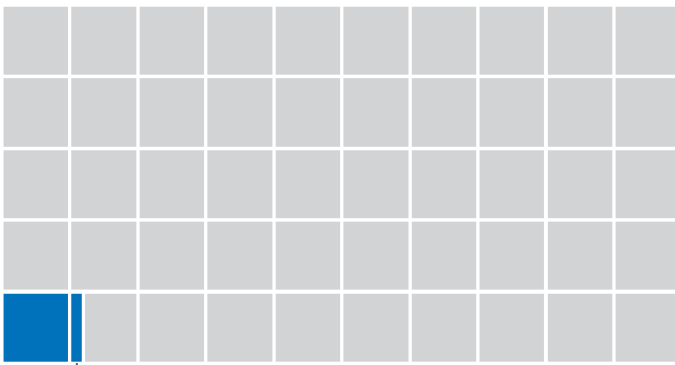
Overall gaps in funding for refugee responses have a direct impact on the ability of all actors to provide child protection services for the most vulnerable refugee children. Too often, humanitarians are being asked to pick up the pieces and respond to growing needs, helping more people in more places while the resources for this critical, lifesaving work are under threat. The result is to prioritise and reprioritise, meaning that children in need of protection are not always able to access the systems and services needed to keep them safe. In practical terms, this means a reduction in case management workers, safe spaces for children, and limits to family tracing and reunification programmes – all measures that keep children safe. Lack of funds for investments in other areas, such as cash assistance or shelter have a direct impact on child protection risks – as families struggle to make ends meet, protection risks to children increase.

Governments, humanitarian, development and peace actors (local, national and international alike), private sector and donors have a responsibility to urgently scale up investment in Child Protection, as well other services that are crucial to prevent harm to children, including education, livelihoods and cash assistance. One thing is clear: ensuring the safety of children in all their diversity is a necessity to achieve a better and more sustainable world for all, for generations to come.

This brief sets out the latest analysis on financing for Child Protection in 2023 to 20 refugee responses within six regional Refugee Response Plans (RRP) and the Rohingya Joint Response Plan (JRP).

Key findings

Proportion of for **Child Protection** funding vs Overall funding across Refugees Response Plans



Only **2.4%** requested for **Child Protection** across all Refugee Response Plans

2.4% Child Protection funding request of overall funds requested across Refugee Response Plans in 2023.

2.7% Child Protection funding received of the overall funds received for the total response across regional Refugee Response Plans in 2023.

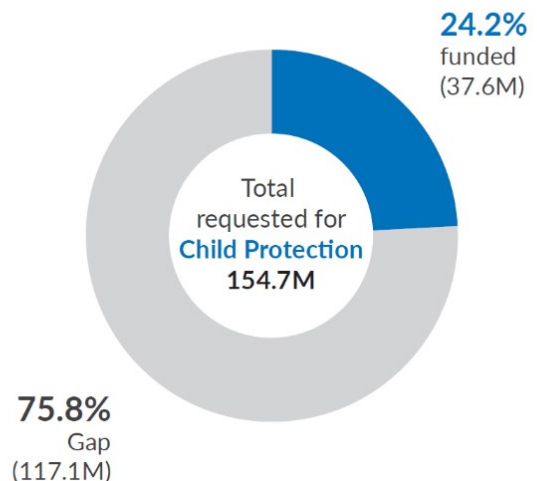
24.2% Child Protection funding received across seven RRP, slightly exceeding the proportion of funding received for the overall appeal in these responses, which stands at 20%

75.8% A significant gap exists between the requested funds (\$154,736,706) and the actual funds received (\$37,560,133) for Child Protection in 2023.

\$117million Funding shortfall, despite an increased prioritisation of Child Protection within RRP.

Significant disparities remain on the funds received by countries within regional RRP.

Child Protection funding status



Data and reporting are improving, with the UNHCR database providing new abilities to disaggregate Child Protection funding across regional RRP, however gaps remain in the funds reported into databases and prevent a full picture of the funds received across regional RRP.

Methodology

This analysis draws data from the UNHCR database available as of 27 September 2023 for six regional RRP: [Afghanistan](#), [Democratic Republic of the Congo \(DRC\)](#), [South Sudan](#), [Sudan](#), [Syria 3RP](#) and [Ukraine](#) and the Financial Tracking Service database for the [Rohingya JRP](#). Data was only included for country appeals where data was available for both the funding required for child protection and funding received (20 countries). UNHCR technical colleagues supported with the collection of specific information on child protection for Ukraine and Syria 3RP to complement the database. The data for the [Rohingya JRP](#) was extracted from the Financial Tracking Service on 17 November with manual disaggregation of data from projects specifically identifying Child Protection within the Protection sector. It reflects data available in the tracking system.

Conclusions

The report is prepared by UNHCR in support of the *Unprotected* series which analyses funding for child protection (see [Unprotected series](#), [Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#)). This first-of-its-kind analysis of funding for child protection specifically in refugee responses highlights that:

- Funding for child protection is a modest component of the overall needs in refugee responses but makes an enormous difference in children's lives
- Funding for child protection in refugee responses is unable to keep pace with expanding needs, largely due to the underfunding of refugee responses in general
- Within available funding for interagency refugee responses, child protection is prioritised (as funding gaps are lower than overall funding gaps for the refugee responses)

In line with previous *Unprotected* reports, and the results of this analysis, the following recommendations are made to sustain and expand the protection of refugee children:

1. Maintain the prioritisation of children and their protection across all refugee responses
2. Increase consistent and predictable funding for refugee settings, including for child protection
3. Shift power and resources to communities, local and national actors
4. Integrate child protection across sectors to prevent risks and maximise outcomes
5. Strengthen children's role and participation as full right holders in the response