

Indonesia

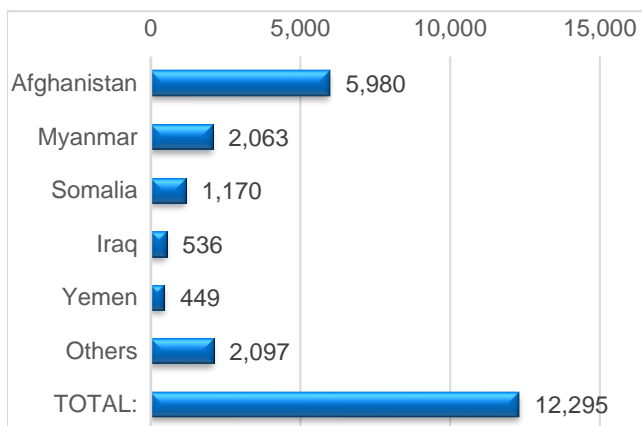
December 2023

12,295 persons registered with UNHCR, including **69% adults** and **29% children**. Of the total number of adults, 72% are men and 28% are women.

Between January - December 2023, **1,752 Rohingya refugees disembarked from 11 boats** in several locations in **Aceh and North Sumatra**.

Of the **3,555 children** registered with UNHCR, **227 children are unaccompanied** by a parent or other adult relative and **106 children are separated** from their parents.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

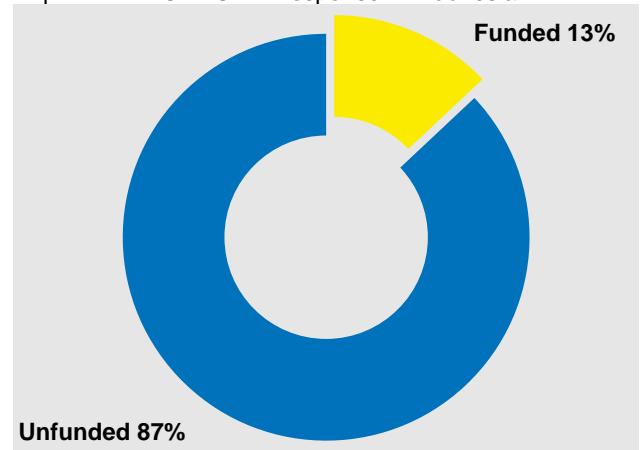


* source: UNHCR statistical report December 2023

2023 FUNDING

USD 13.1M

requested for UNHCR's Response in Indonesia



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

- 34 National Staff
- 8 International Staff
- 52 Affiliated Work Force

Offices:

- 1 Main office [Jakarta]
- 5 Field locations [Aceh, Medan, Pekanbaru, Tanjung Pinang, Makassar]



Photo: ©UNHCR

Protection Environment in Indonesia

- While Indonesia is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, it has a long tradition of allowing access to territory and hosting refugees. Indonesia has enacted a national refugee law – signed as a presidential regulation in December 2016 – which provides access to territory and temporary protection to refugees in the country until longer-term solutions can be found for them. Under the law, the government has authorized UNHCR to help protect and find solutions. The 2016 Presidential Regulation is currently being revised under the leadership of the Coordinating Ministry for the Political, Legal and Security Affairs. At the end of July 2023, UNHCR attended the national coordination meeting to revise the regulation held by the National Refugee Task Force. The office submitted formal inputs to advocate for refugee protection that is aligned with the domestic and international legal instruments. In addition to the Presidential Regulation, the 2011 Immigration Law is currently being revised by the Parliament. UNHCR has also provided input on this although it is unlikely that the revision will be completed before the 2024 election.
- The 2016 Refugee Law includes specific provisions for the government to rescue refugees on boats in distress near Indonesia and to help them disembark safely. Indonesia has long been a destination for Rohingya refugees seeking protection and opportunities after departing Bangladesh and Myanmar by sea. Between November and December 2023, 11 boats carrying 1,752 Rohingya refugees disembarked in several locations in Aceh and North Sumatra. Onward movement by refugees remains a serious concern due to the risks posed by smuggling and trafficking. UNHCR is working together with the authorities, local Refugee Task Force, UN agencies, NGO partners and the local community to provide assistance to disembarked refugees.
- Indonesia is not a party to the 1954 Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons and 1961 Convention on Reduction of Statelessness. In February 2021, according to the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, Indonesian children living without birth certificates reached 6 percent of the population under 18 years of age, or over five million children. UNHCR advocates for access to universal birth registration for all children of marginalized groups, including refugee children, and works closely with the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registry. Presidential Regulation No. 96 Year 2018 and the Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 108 Year 2019 serves as the legal basis for refugee children to attain birth certificates, as confirmed by the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registry of the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, the actual number of refugee children who have received them is still very low due to lack of awareness of the local Civil Registry Office.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works closely with counterparts of the Republic of Indonesia to provide protection and support and to identify solutions for persons under UNHCR's mandate. In particular, UNHCR works closely with the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs and its department for Refugees and People Smuggling, Ministry of Law and Human Rights (including the Directorate-General of Immigration), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Manpower.
- UNHCR collaborates with the UN Resident Coordinator and other UN agencies, including UNICEF, ILO, WHO, UNFPA, UNWOMEN, UNAIDS, and IOM. UNHCR also engages international and national NGOs as well as civil society partners, including UNHCR-funded partners and Refugee-Led Organizations, to assist the government to ensure refugees and stateless persons are protected and provided with assistance. UNHCR works with Church World Service (CWS), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Yayasan Kemanusiaan Madani Indonesia, Jesuit Refugee Service, the Indonesian Red Cross, Dompot Dhuafa, Human Initiative and the National Human Rights Commission. This support includes the provision of emergency and lifesaving medical

assistance, addressing the specific needs of the unaccompanied/separated and other children at risk, distribution of monthly cash allowance to the most vulnerable refugees, education assistance, and sexual and gender-based violence prevention and response.

- UNHCR - together with the UNRC, UNICEF, IOM and through the advocacy of the UN Country Team, along with other partners such as CWS, CRS, University of Indonesia Hospital (RSUI), Jakarta Provincial Government Indonesia Chambers of Commerce and Cargill Indonesia - has facilitated the vaccination of 9,380 refugees since June 2021. Vaccines were obtained from different sources, including the government, donation from the private sector as well as unused vaccines that were initially allocated for UN staff and dependents.
- Different UN Joint Programmes are also being effectively implemented in Indonesia, such as the UN Joint Team on AIDS/HIV, Global Action Plan on Child Wasting, UN Multi-partner Trust Fund on livelihood and economic inclusion, and UNICEF – UNHCR Blueprint for Joint Action.
- Several UNHCR activities are being implemented with support from the private sector. UNHCR's Islamic Philanthropy Unit under the Private Sector Partnership builds partnerships with major philanthropy institutions committed to supporting cash-based interventions.

Main Activities

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- Refugees are not able to exercise their right to work in Indonesia. Recognizing that direct assistance is not sustainable, UNHCR continues to advocate for refugees to be given access to livelihood opportunities and works with partners to create community-empowerment and self-reliance programmes that benefit Indonesians and refugees. The programmes include vocational trainings and entrepreneurship schemes that promote economic development in host communities. In December 2019, at the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) organised by UNHCR in Geneva the Indonesian Government Delegation pledged support to refugee productivity empowerment activity as part of Indonesia's effort to address the global refugee crisis. UNHCR continue to follow up on the pledges made by the government in the 2019 Global Refugee Forum through different opportunities including during the coordination meetings of the national and local refugee task force. In September 2023, Ministry of Manpower issued a Circular Note allowing refugee participation in the skills training programs at the government training centers. The letter will serve as a pivotal entry point for pilot project in 2024. These commitments were again confirmed in the second Global Refugee Forum in December 2023, in addition to Indonesia's commitment to provide access to primary and secondary education for refugee children. UNHCR Indonesia works closely with the UNCT on a common UN pledge which will work to improve the health, education, livelihoods, and birth registration of refugees and stateless people.
- Refugee leaders, representing various nationalities, participate in activities implemented by UNHCR and partners, such as assisting refugees with specific needs in accessing services, disseminating information among the refugee community, managing community learning centres, providing skills training and education for children and adolescents, and providing interpretation and translation services. In 2020, due to the pandemic-related restrictions, UNHCR implemented virtual Town Hall meetings with refugee Representatives and the wider refugee communities in Jakarta and other cities where refugees reside. The office continues this good practice in 2024.
- 1,273 vulnerable refugees from 430 households receive monthly subsistence allowance. The assistance is delivered through post offices in areas where refugees are residing.

Education

- Indonesia is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and provides refugee children access to national schools through the Ministry of Education Circular Letter No. 75253/A.A4/HK/2019 issued on 10 July 2019. UNHCR encourages refugee children to enroll into the national school system. To prepare refugee children, UNHCR works with CRS-HI to teach refugee children Indonesian, as well as basic math and literacy, and local customs and culture.
- UNHCR appreciates the Ministry of Education for the issuance of Circular Letter #75253/A.A4/HK/2019 on the inclusion of refugee children in formal education. Initially, the area of coverage of this circular letter did not include many locations where refugees reside. However, the coverage area expanded when the Circular Letter was revised on 12 May 2022. Additionally, the revision stipulated that schools have to issue a “Graduation Letter” upon a student’s completion of study at all levels as a substitute document to formal certificate from MoECRT. This document can be used by students to continue their studies at a higher level.
- In December 2023, some 808 refugee children (of 3,555 school age children) were enrolled in accredited national schools, most of them are under IOM support. Challenges to increase refugee children’s enrolment rates include limited interest to learn Indonesian and to enroll to national system. Furthermore, there are limited quota in public schools due to government policy to always prioritize Indonesian children over refugee children.
- Refugee children who don’t want to enroll in national system, have access to alternative forms of education. Some 1,000 children are receiving education through refugee learning centres organised by UNHCR, IOM or community-based learning centres led by the refugee communities. These alternative forms of education are also accessible for adults.
- UNHCR encourages refugees to complete accredited courses through Coursera for Refugees, a free online learning platform. By end-December 2023, some 5,521 refugees were enrolled in online education and training platforms such as Coursera and EdX and in educational programs organized by the refugee communities.
- Refugees are unable to access tertiary education in Indonesia due to the lack of legal framework. However, good practices can be found in Pekanbaru, where 7 students are attending sit-in classes and short courses in Universitas Islam Riau and 16 are enrolled in Universitas Negeri Riau in the same program. These two universities accept refugees with the goal, among others, to internationalize their institutions and as part of “Merdeka Belajar” (Free to Learn) policy from MoECRT.

Health

- Refugees have access to primary medical care through public health facilities, as well as community maternity and childcare, which provides immunizations. UNHCR works with partners to cover life threatening/saving medical situations to the extent of available resources.
- During the pandemic, the Ministry of Health issued detailed instructions on COVID-19 vaccination for refugees through a decree which allows refugees with UNHCR issued identity documents to access the private sector vaccination scheme. The national COVID-19 vaccination scheme ensured that at least 70 per cent of the population in the area where refugees reside received a first vaccination dose. The last updated instructions were officially announced on 27 September 2021. As of December 2023, 9,380 refugees received the first dose of vaccination while 8,163 of them have been fully vaccinated (68.2% of the total population of refugees eligible for vaccination) in coordination with the government and the private sector. Additionally, 68 refugees have received their first booster of COVID-19 vaccination.

Durable Solutions

- UNHCR continues to identify and submit the most vulnerable refugees for resettlement consideration and enjoys a relatively high number of resettlement opportunities in relation to the size of the refugee caseload in the country. Over 1,500 refugees departed to resettlement countries from Indonesia in 2023.
- UNHCR Indonesia also continues to work to expand access to complementary pathways for refugees in the country and provides information and guidance to refugees who may be eligible for these programs. Solutions through complementary pathways have increased in recent years, from none in 2020 to over 300 in 2023. UNHCR recognizes and amplifies the link between access to education, skills building, and empowerment activities in Indonesia with improved access to education and labor mobility pathways in third countries. In this way, continued successes with these pathways also serves to reinforce and enhance advocacy with Indonesian authorities on the importance of access to opportunities while in Indonesia. Since mid-2021, UNHCR has collaborated with Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) on a pilot project that matches refugee candidates in Indonesia with employers in Australia and Canada to offer employment and a pathway to residency through labor mobility. In 2023, 328 individuals departed on private sponsorship, eight refugees departed to a third country on family reunification, and seven refugees departed to Canada and Australia on labour mobility programs (another 18 were accepted in 2023 and pending departure at the end of the year).
- UNHCR facilitates voluntary repatriation for refugees who request return, with arrangements made in close cooperation with IOM through its assisted voluntary return program. In the course of 2023, 95 refugees repatriated voluntarily to their countries of origin. Voluntary repatriation is limited by ongoing conflicts and human rights violations in countries of origin, which preclude refugees' interest in and ability to safely return to countries of origin.

Private Sector Partnership (PSP)

- The Private Sector Partnerships Service (PSP) sits under the Division of External Relations (DER) in HQ and the Regional Bureau. It works with different UNHCR Regional and Country Offices to facilitate private sector funds for UNHCR and raise awareness of refugee issues to secure support and funding.
- In December 2023, PSP Indonesia successfully advocated for the refugee cause and facilitated a donation of over USD 1.1 million and secured 215 new donors. In 2023, PSP Indonesia raised over USD 1 million with 10,344 new donors from the digital fundraising programme, Face to Face (F2F), multichannel fundraising, and existing donor. On the Islamic Philanthropy side, in December, UNHCR received some USD 6,553 donations from the BAMUIS BNI were earmarked to support the CBI programme for refugees in Indonesia.

External/ Donor Relations

UNHCR is grateful for the support of the following donors for their funding either directly to the operation or via softly earmarked or unearmarked funds: Australia | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Ireland | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Private Donors | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America

In addition, UNHCR thanks the following organizations, private sector partners and other UN Agencies for their support and donation in recent years: UNICEF | IOM | ILO | UNFPA | UNAIDS | Rumah Zakat Indonesia | BSI Maslahat | Bank Syariah Indonesia | Human Initiative | DT Peduli | BP ZIS Indosat | Wakaf Salman foundation | Bamuis BNI

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