With you

What’s Inside

LIFTING A BARRIER TO EDUCATION THROUGH BIRTH REGISTRATION
You have helped ensure that over 3,000 Sama Bajau and unregistered children in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao are given access to better opportunities.

RESPONDING TO THE GROWING HUMANITARIAN NEEDS IN UKRAINE
Thanks to your support and the solidarity of donors from all over the world, 4 million people displaced by the war in Ukraine have been given life-saving assistance in 2022.

INSPIRING WAVES OF WARMTH AND KINDNESS
Read about the ripple effect of warmth and generosity inspired by donors like you and a campaigner in the field.

Your support helps ensure that populations at risk of statelessness are able to obtain birth documentation, safeguarding their rights and bridging their access to social services such as education and healthcare. © UNHCR/Jorica Pamintuan
As we begin this new year, we draw inspiration from the unwavering kindness that you continue to show for the forcibly displaced during their season of greatest need.

We know things weren’t easy in 2022. Economic turmoil, conflict, disaster and the climate emergency affected all of us in many different ways, taking a special toll on the over 103 million people forced to flee around the world. Yet throughout all these challenges, you’ve stayed compassionate and committed.

In this newsletter, we would like to share some of the incredible things you have helped accomplish in the last quarter of this year. Because of your ongoing support, Arsida can stay in school and achieve her dream of becoming a teacher, along with over 3,000 Sama Bajau and unregistered children who now have birth certificates. Mothers like Inna — who is raising four children on her own amidst the war in Ukraine and the extremely cold winter, can now keep her children warm with the life-saving shelter support and repairs done on her home.

During the last few months of 2022, you opened your hearts further to respond to the needs of forcibly displaced families who were at their most vulnerable because of stronger and more unpredictable weather events. This has inspired a wave of warmth and kindness that provided life-saving assistance and protected those who need help the most.

We know that 2023 will bring new challenges. UNHCR is prepared. And we are grateful that we can count on your continued support for refugees, internally displaced, and stateless people.

Thank you for being part of our work – you’ve made a world of difference.

Kind regards,
Your UNHCR Philippines family
Lifting a barrier to education through birth registration

When Arsida Basari enrolled her daughter — also named Arsida — in elementary school, the teacher asked for the child’s birth certificate, the most basic form of civil documentation in the Philippines. However, like many members of the Sama Bajau indigenous group that she belongs to, Arsida had not been able to secure a certificate of live birth when her daughter was born.

“The teacher told me that I had to submit the birth certificate within three months or Arsida wouldn’t be allowed to proceed with her schooling,” Arsida said.

Undeterred by the school’s rules, Arsida asked if her daughter could start going to classes anyway, promising to send them the birth certificate when she is able to get it. As someone who never attended school, she was determined to ensure her child is able to attain an education.

“I hope she can learn how to write so that she won’t end up like me,” Arsida said, adding, “Maybe once she learns, she can help me one day.”

The Philippine Government identified the Sama Bajau as a population at risk of statelessness in 2011, and has since taken steps to address the issue through the implementation of a National Action Plan to End Statelessness by 2024. For the Sama Bajau in Mindanao, interventions have included educating communities about the need for civil documentation, easing the process and costs of birth registration, and improving the digitization capacities of local civil registrars.

Thanks to your support, the younger Arsida was one of more than 400 Sama Bajau who received their birth certificates as part of the latest batch of participants in UNHCR’s birth registration initiative in 2022, organized in partnership with the Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD) of the Bangsamoro region, UNICEF, and the local government of Patikul, Sulu.

With her newly issued proof of legal identity, young Arsida can stay in school to begin her journey towards achieving her dream of becoming a teacher — a profession she chose so she can help teach her mother someday.

Through the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness and the UNHCR-UNICEF Joint Strategy for Addressing Childhood Statelessness, UNHCR hopes to help individuals like Arsida obtain birth documentation, and in the process, access opportunities that will allow them to build better futures for themselves and their communities.
In 2022, over 4 million people were reached by UNHCR with life-saving relief items, shelter, and protection.

- 1,612,841 people reached with essential items, including in hard-to-access areas
- 987,308 individuals received cash assistance
- 149,235 people received shelter support
- 1,126,549 received protection assistance and information
- 129,429 received safe access to multi-sectoral services

Thank you for helping us respond to emergencies and support families forced to flee.

Source: UNHCR Ukraine Delivery Updates - 28 December 2022
Inna’s family fled their village in Ukraine soon after the war began. When they returned, they found their windows broken and bullet holes in the walls.

After the untimely death of Inna’s husband several years ago, she alone has been raising four children. Inna used to work as a shop assistant at a local shop, but because of the war the shop was closed, and Inna has remained unemployed until now.

With UNHCR shelter materials, she was able to repair the windows and now, when the nights have already started to become cold, the family enjoys the warmth of their home.

Inna describes the assistance she received, and how it will help her family.

“The door was installed. The old one was knocked inside the house after a bomb fell just outside in the yard,” she explained. “Windows on both sides of the house (were damaged), as well as the roof. The ceiling fell as well, but it was repaired too. We would rather live as we used to live.”

“You can’t survive here without windows in winter because it’s really cold here.

As the first snow falls in Ukraine, UNHCR is working fast to repair damaged homes.

With the support of donors, 2,713 houses have been repaired through our shelter programme as of 28 December.

Tamara and her granddaughter, Milana, stand in front of their yard in Chernihiv, Ukraine. Their home was damaged during hostilities earlier this year.

UNHCR has repaired their house through its shelter programme to ensure that the family is warm and safe during the winter season.

Thousands of houses remain damaged by the ravages of war, and many of these displaced families still have to make the impossible choice between food, shelter repairs, heat, and warm clothes for their children.

With your support, UNHCR is working hard to protect each and every individual displaced by the war in Ukraine. We may have been able to reach some individuals, but many more are in desperate need.
INSPIRING WAVES OF WARMTH AND KINDNESS

Donor Feature

A nurse working overseas in Qatar, Jane Leones was waiting for her flight back to Surigao when she encountered a UNHCR booth in a mall in Cebu. Moved by the plight of forcibly displaced families, she signed up as a monthly donor and has remained committed to the mission since 2019.

“I stayed in the donor program because I’ve witnessed how UNHCR is always present, wherever and whenever crises arise. More importantly, I am being given the chance to share my blessings and serve other people for the glory of God.”

When Supertyphoon Rai (Odette) devastated her hometown in the Dinagat Islands, Jane’s sense of connection to a greater mission through her years with UNHCR inspired her to initiate her own campaign, which she called “Rebuild Sta. Cruz Project.”

With the collective efforts of her friends, family, and partners, they were able to personally deliver aid to displaced families.

“My team and I are already planning to extend our advocacy to other places as well that might need help. I will also continue supporting UNHCR. I would like to encourage other people to also start helping others in need. Helping others by donating has been a refreshing reminder to be thankful for what we have,” she shares.

With the multiple crises happening in the world, Jane believes that through random acts of kindness, we can create a positive impact on other people’s lives. “By giving hope to other people, despite the chaos, we can show them that there are still people out there with good hearts.”

Drop us a note and share your journey as a UNHCR supporter. This will be featured in the donor newsletter and website, and inspire many more people to join in the cause.

Share your donor journey today
WARMTH AND KINDNESS

When she was just a teenager, Sheida’s family was forced to flee their home in Zamboanga City due to the armed conflict that displaced more than 119,000 individuals in 2013. She witnessed the uncertainty and fear experienced by displaced families in temporary shelters who had to constantly worry about their health and safety and rely on dwindling food rations. But she also witnessed the kindness of humanity, seeing how UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations gave life-saving aid to the most vulnerable families.

Years later, Sheida found her purpose in being a voice for internally displaced people and became one of UNHCR’s passionate face-to-face campaigners. Having witnessed the impact of humanitarian assistance firsthand, she finds fulfillment when she gets to enlighten donors that they have the opportunity to make a difference by signing up as a committed giver and supporting the work for the long-term.

Sheida recently celebrated her third anniversary as a face-to-face campaigner, and she continues to remain committed to find more kind-hearted souls that will sustain the impact of UNHCR by sharing her story to the people she encounters in the field.

“Being a voice for the underserved and marginalized is what drives me to be of service to others.”

Your support is their lifeline

In their season of greatest need, you have shown the most vulnerable families in Ukraine and the Philippines that you care.

Donors from the Philippines raised over Php 1.79 M in 10 weeks

Thank you for stepping up further to respond to the needs of the forcibly displaced. You have started a ripple of kindness and warmth that has made a difference in the lives of millions.
In their season of greatest need, show them that you care.

A LIFE-SAVING GIFT FROM YOU WILL HELP DISPLACED FAMILIES SURVIVE WINTER

This January and February, millions of refugees and displaced families will be plunged into a desperate situation, where every day is a struggle to survive.

[QR Code]

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