

With you

What's Inside

THANK YOU FOR HELPING SAVE LIVES

In 2023, you helped send vital emergency assistance to 16.7 million people around the world.

#IBELONG CAMPAIGN TO #ENDSTATELESSNESS

With your support, more than 1,300 Sama Bajau and unregistered children in the context of forced displacement due to armed conflict and their families received their birth certificates in Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi.

2ND GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM

New and renewed pledges sustain the Philippines' strong commitment to addressing forced displacement.

DONOR FEATURE: CHANGING LIVES THROUGH COMPASSION

The compassion and generosity of monthly donors like Guada helps us make a difference in the lives of forcibly displaced families around the world.



Children warm their hands in front of a gas heater inside a shelter in Azraq camp in Jordan. Their shelter recently caught fire, destroying all of their belongings during the cold winter. With your support, they now have a new shelter and are being supported by UNHCR with new relief items including blankets, mattresses, a gas cylinder, and kitchen tools. © UNHCR/Claire Thomas

Dear valued donor,

We want to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to you for opening your heart to the most vulnerable communities in the Philippines and beyond. **Your unwavering support and generosity have been pivotal in our journey to help those in need.**

As we look back on another year of challenges and triumphs through this newsletter, we would like to share how **your contributions have made a real difference** in the lives of countless individuals and communities.

Together, we have been able to save lives and send vital emergency assistance to forcibly displaced people in emergency hotspots around

the world. Your commitment has also given hope and access to rights for more than a thousand children and their families in marginalized communities in the Philippines.

As we forge ahead, your continued support gives us strength. Together, we can keep making a positive impact in the world.

**Thank you for standing
#WithRefugees, forcibly
displaced, and stateless people.**

***Maraming salamat,
Your UNHCR Philippines family***

THANK YOU FOR HELPING SAVE LIVES

IN 2023
you helped send vital
emergency assistance to
16.7
MILLION
people around the world



526K
solar lamps



506K
kitchen sets



58K
tents



638K
mosquito nets



1.3M
sleeping mats



buckets
219K



jerry cans
461K



plastic rolls
13K



blankets
2.5M



tarpaulins
1.5M

Türkiye and Syria

In Türkiye, we provided relief items to earthquake survivors, and counseling and cash assistance for refugees. In Syria, we provided protection aid, distributed relief kits and tents.

© UNHCR/Priscilla Greco/Alamy

Libya

We expanded aid efforts in response to the devastating floods, reaching affected individuals with vital relief items and some medical supplies.

© UNHCR/Ahmed Al-Houdiri

Sudan

We supported internally displaced people and refugees inside Sudan and built and upgraded transit facilities in neighbouring countries to receive new arrivals.

© UNHCR/Ala Khair

Armenia

We supported registration of new arrivals, undertook protection monitoring and provided emergency supplies to refugees, including foldable beds and kitchen sets.

© UNHCR/Karen Minasyan

Myanmar and Bangladesh

We distributed shelter supplies and aid to those affected by the heavy rain and assisted the families whose shelters were damaged.

© UNHCR/Reuben Lini Wende

Afghanistan

We provided cash aid, relief items and community programmes, reaching families affected by the earthquakes. We also assisted Afghans forcefully returned from Pakistan.

© UNHCR/Faramarz Barzin

#IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness brings birth certificates, access to rights to more than 1,300 BARMM children

Mother of four, **Hamsiya**, brought her one-year-old child by boat all the way to the neighboring island municipality of **Tabuan Lasa in Basilan** for a birth registration supported by UNHCR in partnership with **MSSD and UNICEF**.

©UNHCR/Karen Cepeda

When staff from the municipal government came bearing news of a free birth registration activity scheduled nearby, 33-year-old mother of four Hamsiya did not hesitate. ***“They said that we had to register in person, that we could not send someone else. I am here because I must register my children, I have four and they are all unregistered.”***

Hamsiya came with her one-year-old in tow, taking a boat early in the morning which brought them from their home in Barangay Suligan all the way to the nearby island of Barangay Bukut Umus, the location of the municipal hall of Tabuan Lasa, where UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, together with partners Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD) of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and UNICEF held a three-day actual birth registration activity. The team facilitated the handover to the local government of education materials as well as equipment that would aid in the digitization of the birth registration process and improve the capacity of local civil registrars (LCRs) even in far-flung communities.

Hamsiya’s children are part of the 1,377 Sama Bajaus and unregistered children in the context of forced displacement due to armed conflict and their families who received their birth certificates during a series of birth registration activities held in Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi in 2023. The activities were held as part of the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness and in line with the UNHCR-UNICEF Joint Strategy for Addressing Childhood Statelessness which has helped more than 4,000 individuals receive birth certificates since 2019. The effort also contributes to the Philippines’ implementation of its National Action Plan to End Statelessness.

“ I am happy because they will now have birth certificates. It was very difficult to register their birth because we are unemployed and could not afford to process their delayed birth registration.

But I had to find a way, because the school requires it and might no longer accept my children if they do not have birth certificates. My eldest will be grade 3 and my other child will be grade 1 this year.”

With your support, a total of **1,377 Sama Bajau and unregistered children** in the context of **forced displacement due to armed conflict** and their families in four far-flung municipalities in **Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi** received their birth certificates in 2023.



©UNHCR/Gia Luga

Aside from providing support during the conduct of actual birth registration, local government units also received equipment for digitization of the processes at the Local Civil Registrar's level, as well as **advocacy campaign materials** that highlight the importance of birth registration.

“ Before, only around 20% of the people of Tabuan Lasa had access to birth registration, being **one of the most remote municipalities**. Now we have this birth registration as **a long-time program** where we envision newborns to be registered immediately after birth.”

Mayor Moner Manisan
Tabuan Lasa, Basilan



©UNHCR/Gia Luga



©UNHCR/Gia Luga

“ We reiterate our call to partner LGUs: continue to carry out our responsibility and duty to **protect the welfare of the children** in our municipalities.”

Minister Raissa Jajurie
BARMM Minister of Social Services and Development

“ Having a birth certificate facilitates the processes towards **gaining nationality**, which is **a fundamental right of every human being**. UNHCR is grateful for the continued cooperation of all our partners in the **#IBelong Campaign** efforts.”

Maria Ermina Valdeavilla-Gallardo
UNHCR Philippines Head of National Office



©UNHCR/Gia Luga

PH submits more than 24 new pledges in 2nd Global Refugee Forum

New and renewed pledges sustain Philippines' strong commitment to addressing forced displacement

The Philippines has once again demonstrated its strong commitment to enhancing the rights, welfare, and inclusion of the forcibly displaced, stateless, and those at risk of statelessness and ultimately, to leaving no one behind, as it submitted more than 24 new pledges during the second Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Undersecretary Raul Vasquez of the Department of Justice and head of the country's delegation to the 2023 GRF underscored that the new pledges from the Philippines focused on protection, solutions and inclusion, particularly in enhancing the access of the forcibly displaced, stateless and those at risk of statelessness to social protection, greater economic inclusion, refining policies and laws, and improving data in addition to the country's ongoing efforts to end statelessness and providing access to higher education to Rohingya youth through the Complementary Pathways Programme.

As each pledge and each crisis situation increasingly demand more from us, we should not forget the most fundamental of our considerations: the rights, inclusion, safety, and welfare of all displaced persons."

RAUL VASQUEZ
Department of Justice Undersecretary

UNHCR Philippines Head of National Office Maria Ermina Valdeavilla-Gallardo welcomed the new pledges from the Philippines and reiterated UNHCR's commitment to helping the country with its whole-of-society approach to addressing forced displacement and statelessness.

These new pledges are a testament to the Philippines' dedication to providing hope away from home, which is very important as the world continues to face increasing insecurities and challenges.

MARIA ERMINA VALDEAVILLA-GALLARDO
UNHCR Philippines Head of National Office

Held every four years, the Global Refugee Forum brought together governments, international financial organizations, business leaders, humanitarian and development actors, refugees and civil society representatives in support of the practical implementation of the objectives set out in the Global Compact on Refugees, a framework adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2018 for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing among states.

Photos © Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations in Geneva





Changing Lives Through Compassion

GUADA TAGALOG PANTE
UNHCR Monthly Donor since 2019

Guada Tagalog Pante is a mother of two, visual artist, energy healer, and life coach who is passionate about creating and sharing art that helps and heals others. She is also one of UNHCR's loyal monthly donors, helping protect people forced to flee since 2019.

She remembers that when the UNHCR cause was first explained to her, she felt a calling to contribute in her own simple way. ***"I've always wanted to give back and share my blessings, and I feel God sent me UNHCR as an answer,"*** she shares. Deeply moved by UNHCR's mission to aid displaced families and children in finding safety towards rebuilding their lives in dignity, Guada became a steadfast supporter of UNHCR.

"I really commend UNHCR for helping displaced families and children find new homes or at least, with our donations, have something to start with their new life. The world is at war and so many innocent lives are affected. Even if I am far away, I feel that I am also taking part in changing the lives of these victims through my donations," Guada says.

The discovery of her most rewarding experience as a donor came when the challenges of the pandemic brought her own set of hurdles as a business owner. Guada realized that even during the most challenging times, she can still find a way to give.

"Never did it occur to me to suspend my donations because I know how valuable every penny is and I just somehow made it work... It gives me peace knowing that I am doing something good to someone out there. That I know my savings are going to save somebody's life," Guada shares.

More than three years after she made that first donation, Guada remains steadfast in her commitment to support the most vulnerable, and is grateful for the opportunity to help and extend her love to those who need it most.

UNHCR is my monthly reminder to show up for the world and offer what I can no matter how my life looks like."

As a mother, Guada's hope for displaced families goes beyond finding shelter – she hopes they can also find a better home, livelihood, and environment to raise their children.

"I hope displaced families heal from the trauma and find a way to still follow their dreams and start anew despite the challenge they experienced. May they still find the light in the darkness and use it to find peace in their situation. May more people help them find their way back to a beautiful life."

No matter how busy or challenging life may seem, Guada remains to be a shining example of generosity and compassion, contributing to changing the lives of displaced families and also inspiring others to do the same.



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





GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE

EVERYONE DESERVES THE CHANCE TO SAY #IBELONG

Help reach more children and populations at risk of statelessness in vulnerable and far-flung communities in the Bangsamoro region.

[**donate.unhcr.org/end-statelessness**](https://donate.unhcr.org/end-statelessness)

STAY INFORMED WITH UPDATES

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