

UNHCR'S TRANSFORMATION

BEYOND BORDERS



*“Over the past eight years, we have worked to transform how we operate, making considerable strides in **efficiency, agility, collaboration and inclusivity.***

As part of the broader UN reform, we’ve adapted to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. Now, we’re sharing that story and unveiling some of the changes that have empowered us to better protect and support millions in need across the globe – giving you a glimpse into our ongoing evolution.”

Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



EVOLVING TO MEET GLOBAL CHALLENGES

UNHCR has been undergoing a powerful transformation, fully embracing the UN 2.0 vision to tackle unprecedented global displacement.

Since 2018, we've decentralized operations, bringing decision-making closer to the people to enhance agility and responsiveness.

By embedding innovation, data and technology into our core, we're not just reacting to crises; **we're proactively shaping the future of humanitarian aid**. Guided by the principles of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Sustainable Development Goals, we're driving forward sustainable solutions, strengthening partnerships and expanding our impact. This publication reveals some of the bold steps we've taken – and continue to take – to ensure that no one is left behind.

Dive into this publication to discover how we're making it happen.

GREENING UNHCR AND OUR RESPONSES

UNHCR is revolutionizing sustainable humanitarian aid, significantly cutting emissions and leading the charge with solar power and eco-friendly initiatives

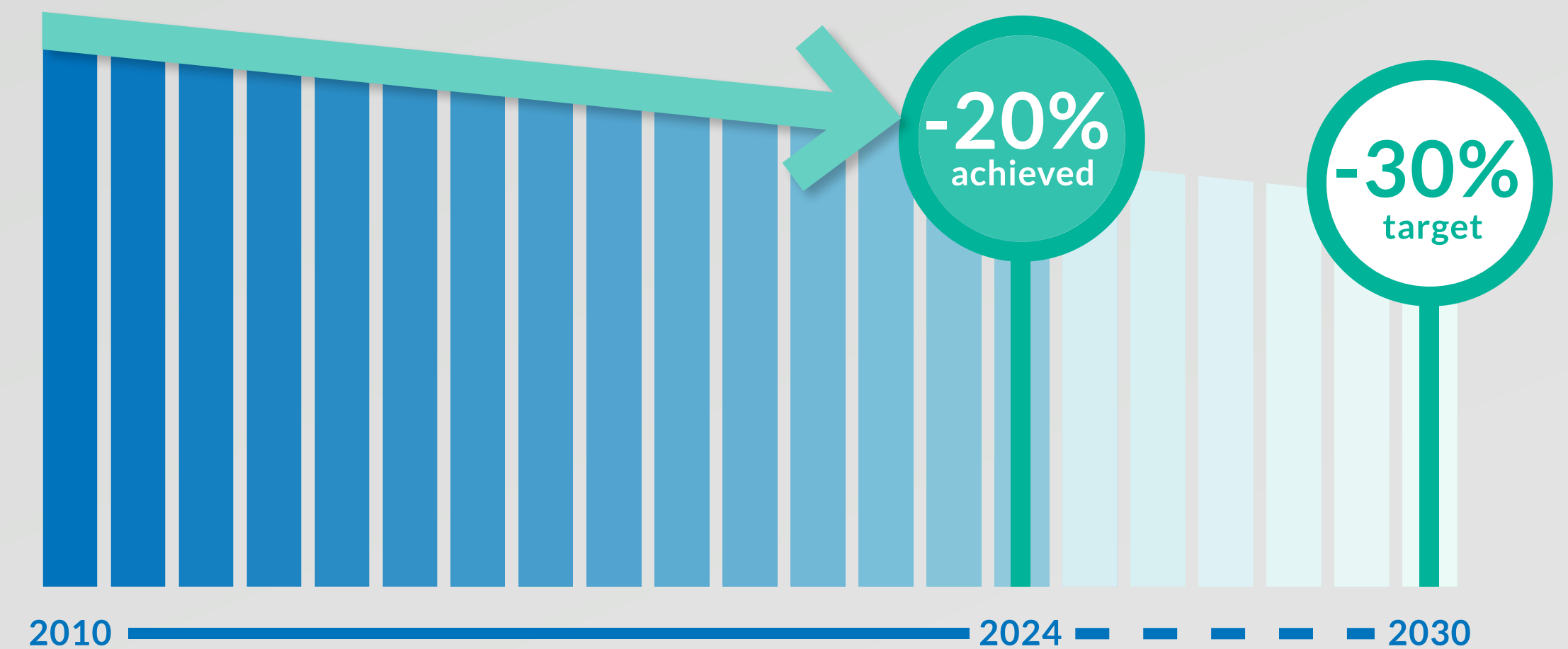


Yunus Safizada, who fled his village seven years ago due to conflict, has returned to a new home built by UNHCR in Kunduz, Afghanistan, where he now grows vegetables and rebuilds his life with his nine children.

HERE'S HOW WE MADE IT HAPPEN

- **We redesigned our emergency relief items**, incorporating recycled materials to make them more eco-friendly. This effort will cut 70,000 tons of CO₂ emissions per year – the equivalent of taking 16,000 gasoline-powered cars off the road.
- **We went solar across our operations.** UNHCR has already solarized 50% of its refugee-serving boreholes and 46% of its health facilities. [Project Flow](#) will take this further by converting diesel-powered water systems to solar, reducing CO₂ emissions by 180,000 tonnes over the next 10 years – equal to growing nearly 3 million trees for 10 years.
- **We transitioned our offices to renewable energy**, targeting 80% of office emissions for [solarization](#), particularly in climate-vulnerable regions. This five-year initiative will cut office carbon emissions by 60-90% annually – the equivalent of 15,152 roundtrip flights between Geneva and New York – while enabling up to 25% financial savings.
- **We reduced our annual direct emissions from buildings, fleets and travel by 20% since 2010.** This reduction, from 65,464 to 52,371 tonnes of CO₂, is equivalent to the carbon absorbed by 1,190 hectares of forest.

EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS



-20% globally since 2010 from UNHCR's buildings, fleet and travel.
On target for -30% by 2030.

INVESTING IN LOCAL RESPONSES AND PARTNERSHIPS

UNHCR is driving transformative change through cash-based interventions, digital aid and local partnerships, empowering communities and enhancing access to critical services

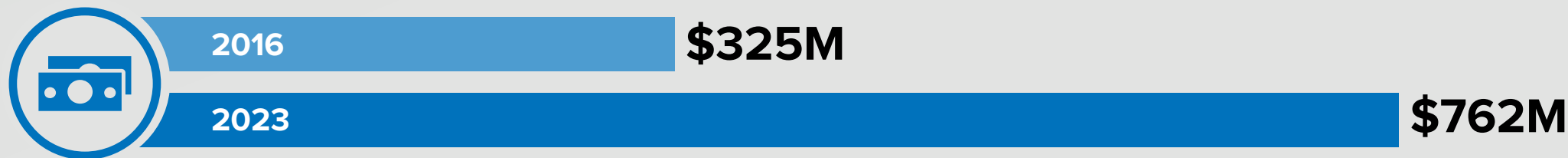
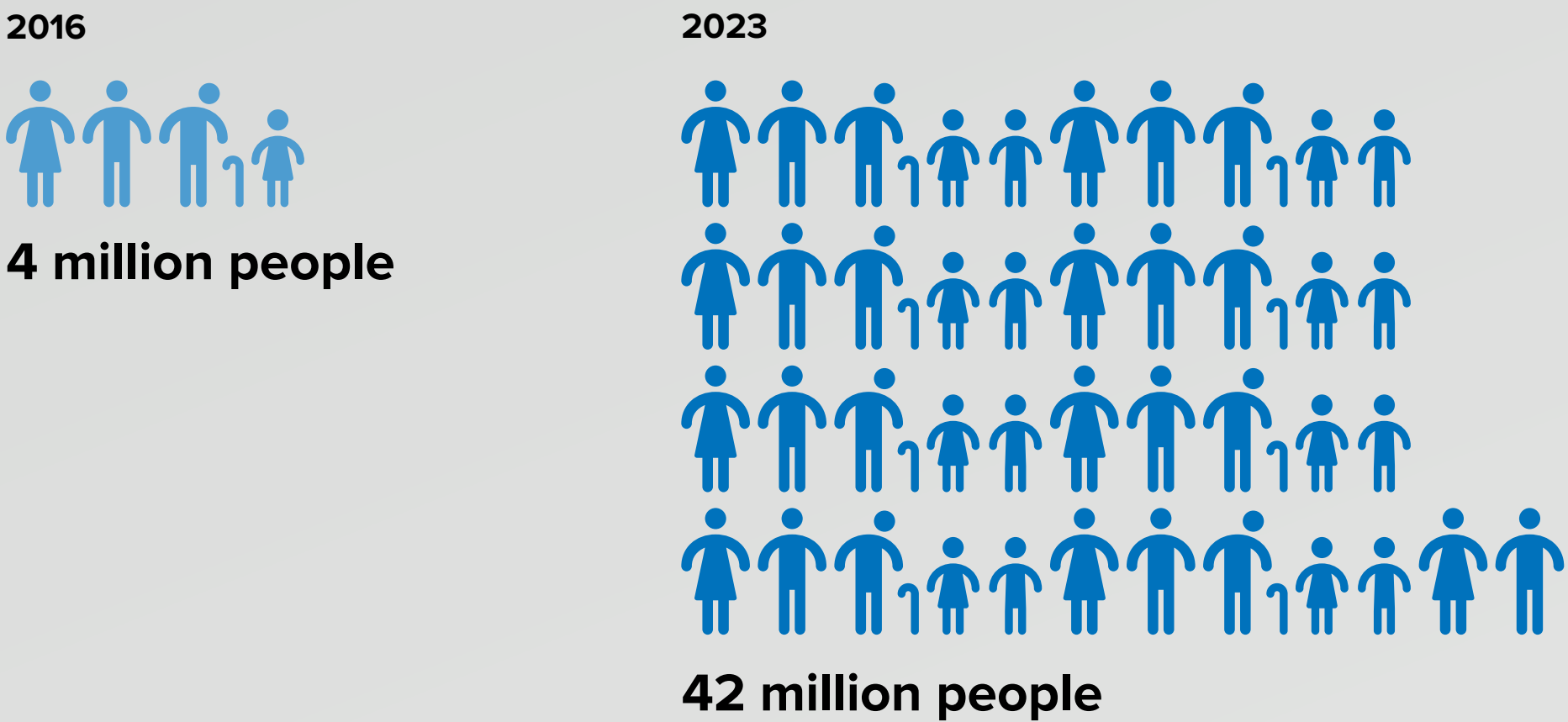


Dorotea, a Burundian refugee and mother of seven, grows potatoes to support her family after Cyclone Gombe destroyed her home in Mozambique, where UNHCR is helping rebuild resilient shelters.

HERE'S HOW WE MADE IT HAPPEN

- **We made cash-based interventions** our default model, contributing to the “[Grand Bargain](#)” between humanitarians and donors. Since 2013, our market-based aid surged from under \$100 million to \$762 million in 2023, powering sustainable, community-driven solutions.
- **We distributed nearly \$5.1 billion in cash assistance**, reaching 42 million people across 110 countries between 2016 - 2023. 80% of recipients received their cash through electronic payment, making our aid faster, more secure and more efficient.
- **We built a network of “[Help](#)” websites**, providing critical information to displaced people. Starting with one site in Costa Rica in 2016, our Help network expanded to 141 countries by 2024, reaching 13 million people in just one year.
- **We strengthened localization** by partnering with 1,266 funded partners, 85% of which are local and national partners, up from just over 900 in 2020 – marking a 19% increase. Local and national responders now receive 57% of our funding, placing them at the core of our efforts.

CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS



RESPONDING BETTER TOGETHER

UNHCR embraces global
partnerships, the UN Reform and
a whole-of-society approach

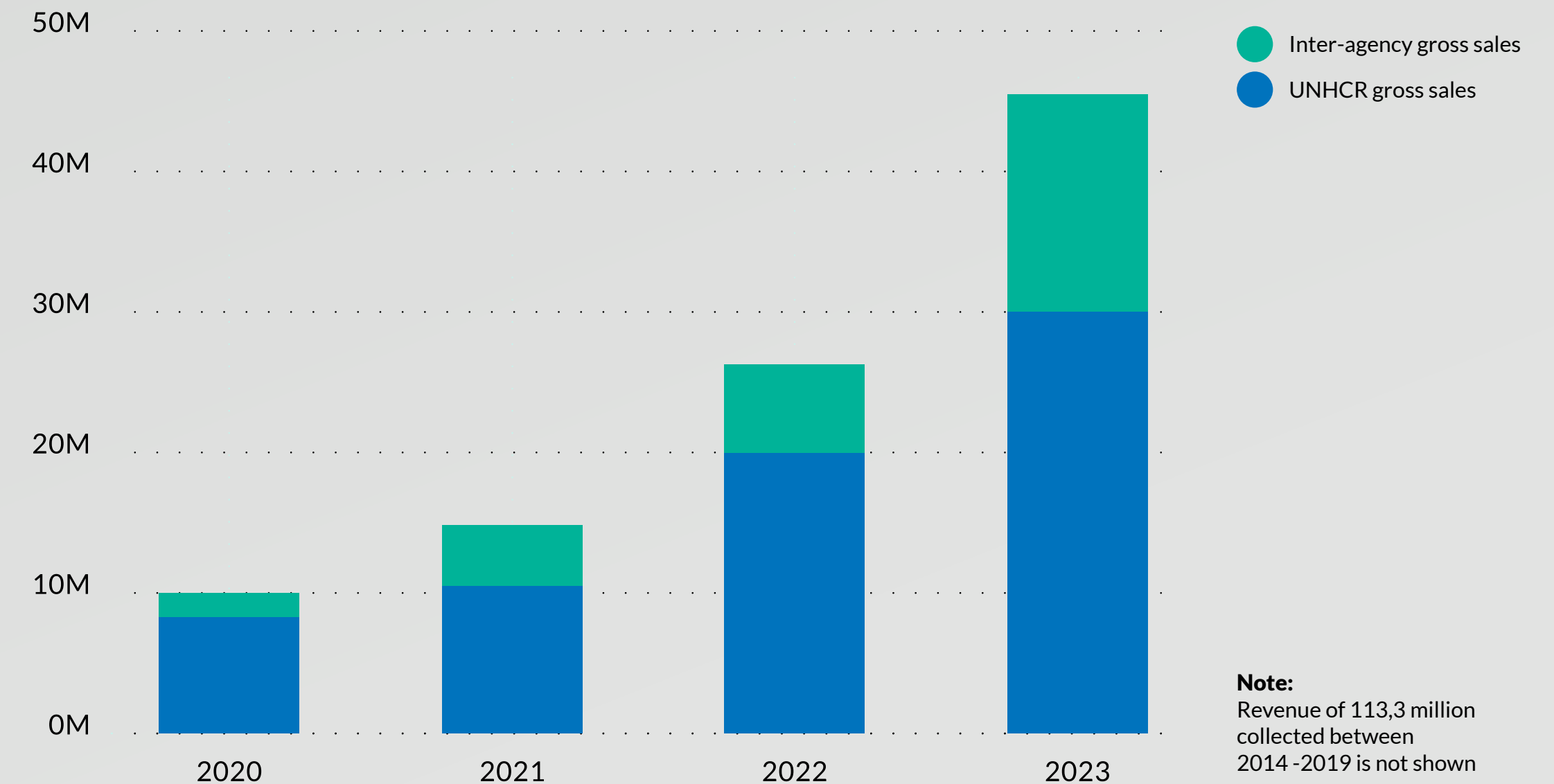


Renk, South Sudan – 2024: A joint interagency operation in action, transporting returnees and refugees to safety.

HERE'S HOW WE MADE IT HAPPEN

- **We generated over \$210 million of revenue for the UN system over the past 10 years**, by partnering with 15 UN agencies through our [Global Disposal Service \(GDS\)](#) to repurpose fixed assets like vehicles and generators. This effort supports programme activities and offsets operating costs, showcasing our commitment to sustainability and efficiency.
- **We built a powerful global network through the UN Partner Portal**, together with ten other UN Agencies, registering over 11,000 partner organizations and facilitating the establishment of more than 1,500 UNHCR partnerships to enhance humanitarian responses across the globe.
- **We secured \$2.22 billion in financial commitments at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum**, along with over \$50 million in funding for refugee resettlement and community sponsorships. This support is not only transforming lives, but also encouraging host countries to enhance their policies in support of refugees.
- **We developed a [sanctions screening bot](#)**. Alongside, WFP and UNICC, our Joint Sanctions Screening Bot has conducted billions of checks to ensure compliance with global sanctions, protecting financial integrity across UN operations.

GENERATED REVENUE THROUGH GLOBAL DISPOSAL SERVICE



DIVERSIFYING UNHCR'S DONOR BASE

UNHCR pioneers growth
in private sector funding and
innovative financial models to
bolster emergency response
and long-term solutions

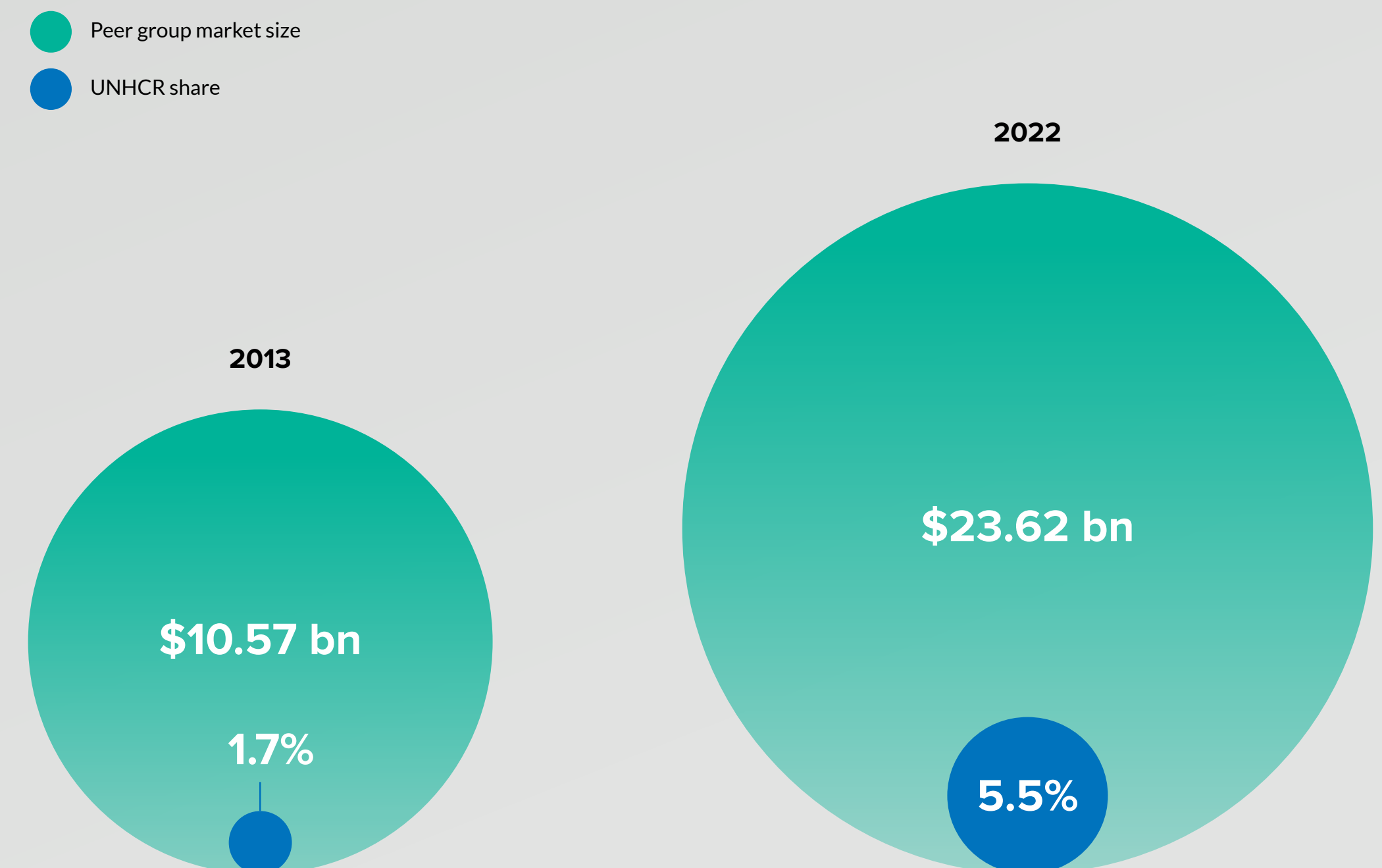


Refugee and host community children in Mahama, Rwanda, attend school together. UNHCR and ProFuturo Foundation are enhancing education for 17,000 students through technology and teacher training.

HERE'S HOW WE MADE IT HAPPEN

- **We translated public support into action.** Since launching our 2018 strategy, [private sector income](#) has surged by 71%, contributing 39% to our unearmarked funds. In just a decade, individuals have given \$2 billion in unearmarked funds, enabling us to respond swiftly to crises.
- **We pioneered innovative financing.** Since 2019, our approach to innovative financing enabled us to secure over \$110 million in new funding, helping us to catalyze an additional \$550 million toward projects that bridge humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts.
- **We empowered refugee-led solutions.** Through the [Refugee-led Innovation Fund](#), we've supported over 40 refugee-led organizations across 33 countries with \$2 million in funding, fostering a "whole-of-society" approach to building resilience and sustainable outcomes. Notable 2024 projects include aquaponic farming in Malawi to improve women's job prospects and tackle food insecurity and a digital hub in Ecuador designed to promote economic integration.

PRIVATE SECTOR MARKET SIZE IN THE PEER GROUP AND UNHCR SHARE IN USD AND PERCENTAGE



GOING DIGITAL, LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGIES

UNHCR is at the forefront of leveraging cutting-edge technology, digital systems and AI-driven analytics, enhancing operational efficiency and saving lives



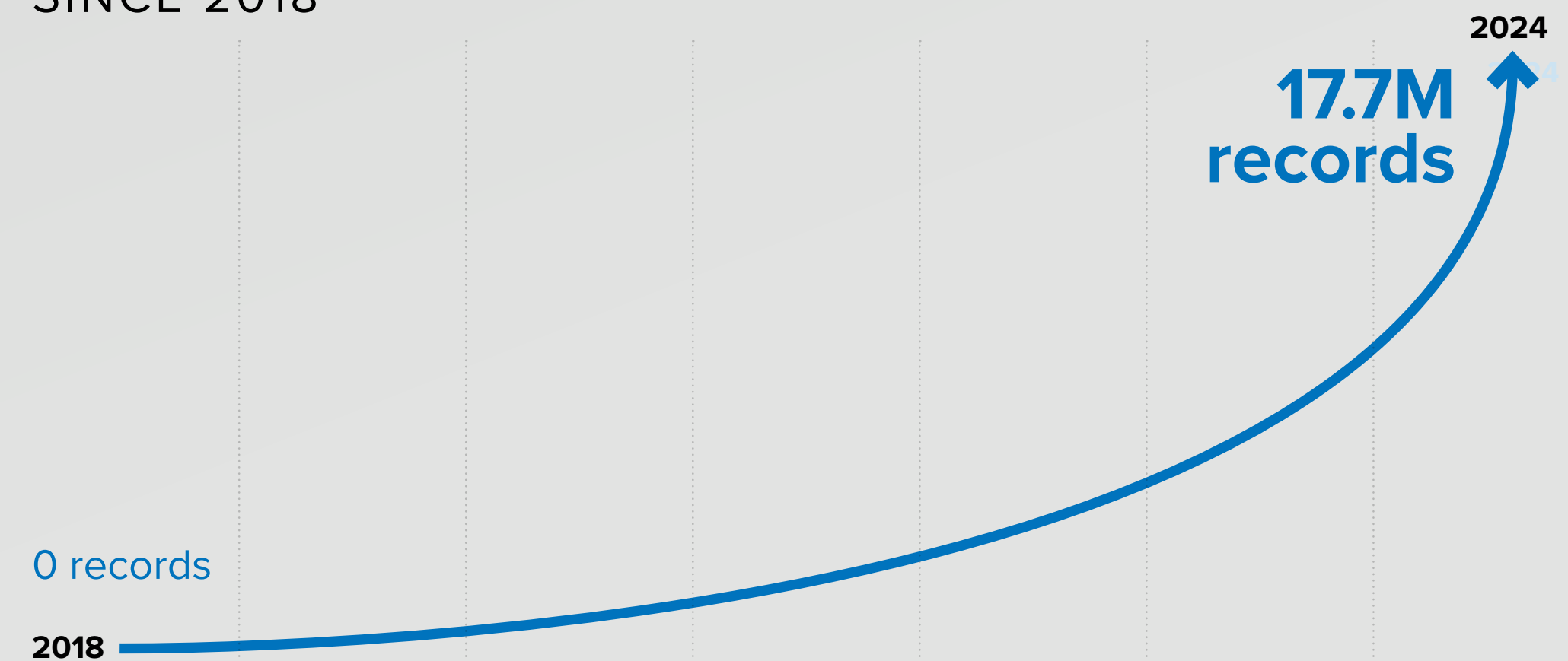
In early 2022, UNHCR and Senegal's CNRRPD conducted a refugee verification activity, using new registration technology like fingerprinting and iris scans to re-register refugees for updated residence permits.

HERE'S HOW WE MADE IT HAPPEN

- **We led with cash and blockchain.** Our [CashAssist system](#), launched in 53 countries since 2018, has revolutionized aid delivery, with blockchain technology setting [new benchmarks for transparency and security in Ukraine](#).
- **We moved refugee registration to the cloud.** In 2023, UNHCR completed one of Microsoft's largest migrations ever, shifting our entire refugee registration system to the cloud to serve 17 million refugees globally. This move empowers over 15,000 users to serve 100,000 displaced persons daily across 135 operations.
- **We went fully digital.** Through our [Business Transformation Programme \(BTP\)](#) we've eliminated inefficient paper-based processes, becoming one of the first UN agencies to move entirely to the cloud.
- **We embraced Artificial Intelligence (AI) for smarter aid**, deploying over 60 AI use cases and 30 chatbots to improve humanitarian services. By leveraging predictive analytics, we're making faster, data-driven decisions, all while ensuring strict adherence to security, due diligence and data protection standards.

- **We predicted crises with precision.** Our advanced risk analysis systems predicted 80% of conflict emergencies in 2023, enabling supply mobilization for 1 million people within 72 hours.
- **We improved response through data.** Our [Orion Analytics Centre](#) has expanded automated cross-organization data processing from zero records in 2022 to 17.7 million in 2024, centralizing and curating data from UNHCR's multiple enterprise systems. By incorporating an age, gender and diversity lens, we optimize resource allocation and ensure inclusive, tailored responses.

ORION DATA VOLUME SINCE 2018



INVESTING IN COLLEAGUES

UNHCR fosters a collaborative work environment while promoting accountability, trust, and transparency.



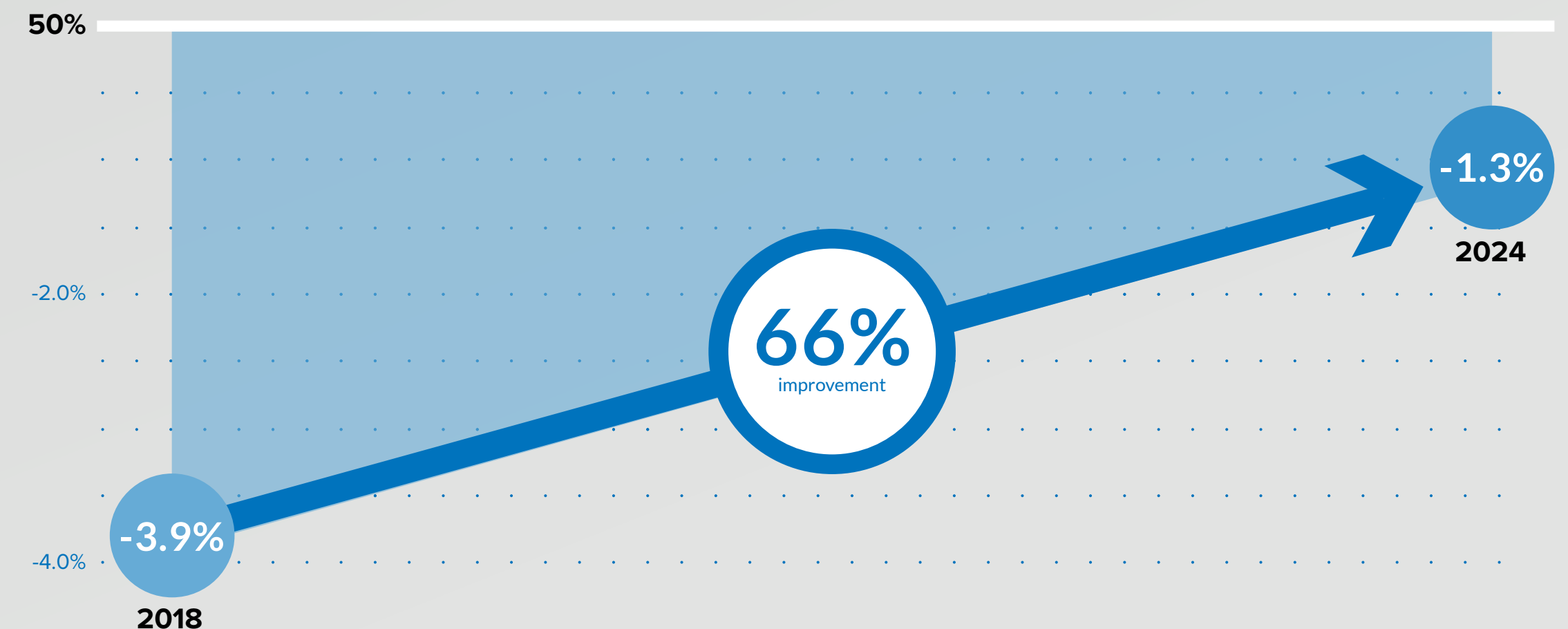
UNHCR in Medellín celebrated the World Refugee Day in a public park called "UVA Nuevo Amanecer". During this event, UNHCR along with its partners and allies offered services and access to rights to Venezuelan population and victims of the Colombian armed conflict.

HERE'S HOW WE MADE IT HAPPEN

- **We stood out in our efforts for Gender Mainstreaming**, achieving a 12% higher score than the UN System in 2022.
- **We led the fight against sexual misconduct.** In 2020, UNHCR set a new standard across the UN System with a groundbreaking [Victim-Centred Approach Policy](#). We were also the first UN agency to launch the innovative [#NotOnlyMe](#) campaign, empowering victims to seek help safely and anonymously. Other UN agencies have shown interest in joining, promoting a safer, more respectful workplace.
- **We embraced behavioural science for culture change.** This is being done by using the findings from our recent 2024 culture assessment, whose parameters are based on the [UN System Leadership Framework](#) and applying insights from UN 2.0 to increase the impact on areas such as performance management and risk-informed decision-making across the organization.

- **We achieved gender parity.** Through our 2022-24 Gender Parity Action Plan, we've reached full parity across international grades in 2024, marking a significant achievement aligned with the [UN System-Wide Strategy on Gender Parity](#).

GAP TO 50% PARITY IN INTERNATIONAL FEMALE REPRESENTATION



A CLEAR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

We have taken big steps to reshape how we deliver protection and aid and find solutions – driven by innovation, collaboration, and inclusivity. Yet, we are not finished.

True success lies not only in responding to immediate crises, but in making a lasting impact on the lives of the forcibly displaced, stateless people and their communities. **Throughout this publication, we have shared some examples of our evolution – whether by greening our operations, investing in local responses and partnerships, strengthening our digital capabilities, diversifying our donor base, or empowering our colleagues and promoting diversity.** And there are many more. But the work doesn't end here.

To secure a future where everyone can rebuild their life with dignity, we must continue to deepen partnerships, secure more flexible funding and prioritize sustainable solutions. Your support is essential to keep compassion, hope, and resilience at the heart of our global response.



*“Every step we take in transforming UNHCR is driven by our unwavering commitment to those with and for whom we work. **It’s not just about championing innovation and changing processes, but about changing lives.** A future where everyone has the opportunity to rebuild their life with dignity. But transformation is not a solo effort—it’s a shared mission that demands the collective action of all of us, united in compassion, to build a more just and resilient world.”*

Kelly T. Clements, Deputy High Commissioner