

Malawi

August 2024

55,425 refugees and asylum-seekers were registered in Malawi as of 31 August 2024. This included **304** new arrivals, **12** in situ and **147** new-born babies. The majority live in Dzaleka refugee camp.

Dzaleka camp initially designed for **10,000 – 12,000** refugees and asylum-seekers currently has over **55,000** forcibly displaced individuals living in congestion and vulnerable to infectious diseases like TB, COVID-19 and cholera.

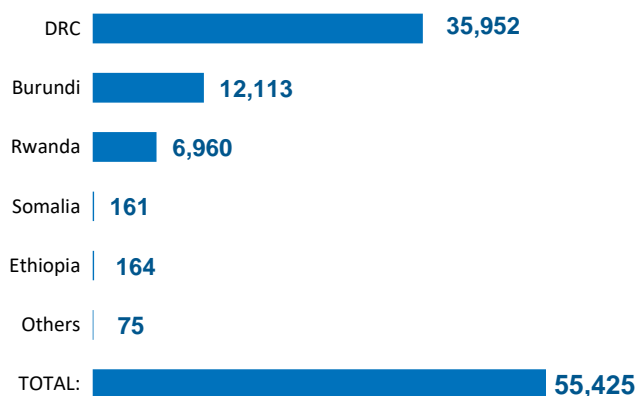
Country Overview

Malawi is home to more than **55,000** refugees and asylum-seekers. Prior to the Government issuing a relocation order in April 2021 requiring all refugees living outside Dzaleka refugee camp to return to the camp, an estimated **8,000** resided in rural and urban towns across the country.

The camp was established to host between **10,000** to **12,000** individuals but is now home to **55,425** inhabitants. Approximately **200** new asylum-seekers and **150** new births are registered every month. Malawi has been hosting some of the refugees for 30 years and the protracted conflict in the Great Lakes Region prevents their safe return.

POPULATION SERVED BY UNHCR

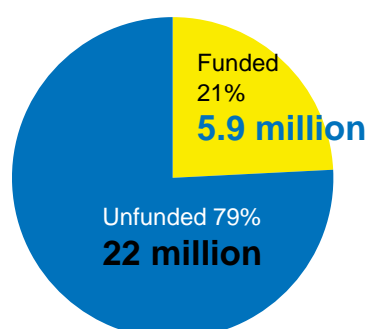
By Country of Origin



FUNDING (AS OF 31 AUGUST 2024)

USD 27.9 million

requested for the UNHCR operation in Malawi.



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

23 National Staff

9 International Staff

34 Others

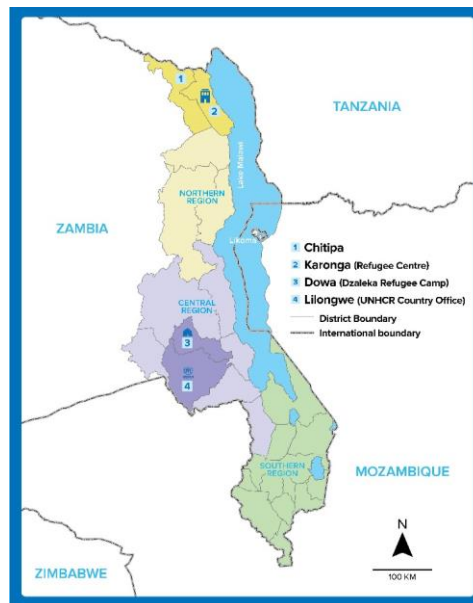
TOTAL STAFF:

66

Offices:

1 Branch Office in
Lilongwe

1 Field Office in Karonga



UNHCR aims to maximize the utilization of available funds/resources, networks, and partners to enhance access to education for school-going children and improve the quality of education services provided in Dzaleka.
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Working with Partners

Under the Refugee Coordination Model, UNHCR coordinates activities with the following partners in Malawi:

- **Government partners:** Ministry of Homeland Security (MoHS), Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP).
- **Implementing Partners:** Plan International Malawi (PIM), Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and Moravian Humanitarian and Development Services (MoHDevS).
- **Operational partners:** There Is Hope Malawi, Moravian Church and Ubuntu Nation Project.
- **UN Agencies:** World Food Programme (WFP), International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- UNHCR is part of the UN Country Team (UNCT), the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and other National Sectorial/Technical Working Groups

Main Activities of UNHCR



PROTECTION

- **Advocacy regarding the relocation order:** The Government initially issued the relocation order in April 2021 requiring all refugees living outside Dzaleka refugee camp to return to the camp, which was enforced in May 2023. Since the enforcement of the order, there was a steady flow of people arriving in the camp however, it reduced over time and paused between October 2023 and January 2024. **Only one family of two people** have relocated from the city to Dzaleka refugee camp in 2024. This relocation followed a directive put out by the Lilongwe District Council on 18 January 2024 requiring all individuals living outside the camp to voluntarily go back to the camp or face law enforcement. Cumulatively, **768 families of 2,301 refugees and asylum-seekers** have so far returned to Dzaleka refugee camp since the relocation order was issued three years ago. UNHCR continues to work to strengthen the extension capacity of the camp at the extension areas of Katubza, Woodlot and Dzaleka Hills to accommodate more refugees (for those relocating and new arrivals).



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- **Voluntary Repatriation:** Voluntary repatriation and resettlement are the focus of durable solutions as prospects for local integration remain limited. Resettlement opportunities remain limited to a small percentage of the population. Since the beginning of 2024, **84** Burundians and **1** Somali have voluntarily returned to their home countries to date. Cumulatively, a total of **310** individuals have returned since the beginning of the exercise in 2023.
- **Resettlement:** In 2023, UNHCR in Malawi surpassed the allocated quota of resettlement cases and is leading in the southern Africa region for the third consecutive year. The allocated quota was **2,600** with **2,715** submissions made.

**SHELTER**

- Dzaleka refugee camp remains highly congested resulting in poor living conditions and poor infrastructure being constructed due to limited space and resources. To improve housing conditions in the camp, a total of **8,047 housing units** were constructed in 2023. In 2024, significant progress has been made so far in shelter and infrastructure establishment at the camp extension areas of Katubza, Woodlot and Dzaleka Hills to accommodate more refugees (returnees and new arrivals).
- To further address the existing challenges from the congestion of Dzaleka refugee camp, the Government has identified a new site in Kayilizi area, in the north district of Chitipa, to establish an open settlement. To date, two Joint Assessment Missions (JAM) to the area were conducted in July 2023 and March 2024. The proposed site is **439 hectares** which will accommodate **10,240 households** of approximately **51,200 individuals**.

**EDUCATION**

- The camp has **1 public preschool**, **2 public primary schools**, **1 public secondary school**, and **27 private schools** (preschool, primary, and secondary). UNHCR and its partners support the public schools, while faith-based organizations and community members established the private schools in the camp. All schools follow the Malawi curriculum, and learners can access national examinations.
- UNHCR and its partners also support post-secondary education through various scholarships in Dzaleka, universities, and post-secondary centres within Malawi and online.

**HEALTH**

- The Dzaleka Health Centre is located within the camp. The health centre offers essential healthcare services to refugees and asylum-seekers residing in the camp, as well as to the local people in the host community of Dowa District. The catchment population of the health centre is around **86,000** which includes some **54,000** individuals from the refugee camp, with the remainder from the surrounding host community.
- The Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UNHCR. According to this agreement, the health centre receives assistance from UNHCR in terms of personnel, as well as medicine and medical supplies.

**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

- Refugees and asylum-seekers in Dzaleka Refugee Camp face insufficient food consumption. A WFP assessment in November 2023 revealed that only **22% of households** were marginally food secure with WFP's help. WFP announced an increase in the ration size of general food assistance at Dzaleka from the previous cut of **50% to 75%** starting in August 2024 to cushion the refugee community from the impact of El Niño-induced food insecurity.

**WATER AND SANITATION**

- The primary source of water supply in Dzaleka refugee camp is boreholes, extracting water through **36 functional handpumps** and **13 functional electrical pumps**, which feed **275 functional taps** (including institutions). Recent efforts have been made to improve water quality by decongesting boreholes from human activity and the chlorination of eight of the solar-powered water systems.
- The camp has both household and communal latrines and there are approximately **324 communal latrine stances** in the camp (including institutions). In the 2023 annual WASH household survey, **84.5% of households** reported having their own sanitation facility which is close to the UNHCR post-emergency target of at least 85% of households with a household latrine. **30.3%** of households have a handwashing device and **54.5%** of households have access to soap. It is challenging to increase the number of household sanitation facilities due to limited space, especially in the old sections of the camp.
- **80% of households** reported having access to a solid waste disposal facility in the 2023 survey. Dzaleka refugee camp produces more than **25,000 kilograms** of waste per day. It is estimated that more than **80%** of this waste is organic matter. Waste is collected and disposed of in **13 established collection sites** distributed across the camp, which is collected and transported to a central dumping site. However, rubbish management remains a challenge since trash often accumulates outside of the designated areas.

**LIVELIHOODS**

- The enforcement of the relocation order has hindered refugees and asylum-seekers since they have been deprived of livelihood opportunities in urban and rural areas. UNHCR is working to identify livelihood beneficiaries from both the refugee and host communities. Currently, less than **7%** of the total population in the camp benefits from livelihood activities. Plan International Malawi is currently implementing livelihood activities in the camp for crop and livestock production, insect farming and enterprise development.

Strategic Directions

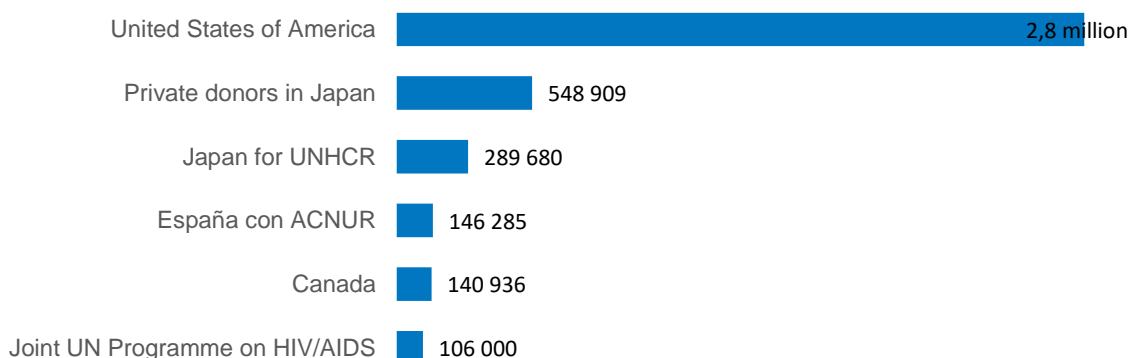
- By the end of 2026, UNHCR in close collaboration with its partners aims to achieve a more **conducive environment** for refugees and asylum-seekers to access protection, assistance, and solutions in Malawi.
- Create a more conducive protection environment including a **review of the legal frameworks** and strengthen refugee status determination by advocating for a progressive and integrated approach to refugee management to enable the harmonization of humanitarian and development activities.
- Develop an **integrated settlement approach** under the national development programme and enhance the emergency response capacity.
- Support **self-reliance**, **economic inclusion**, and **enhanced livelihood opportunities** by working with the government to create an enabling environment per the UNHCR and partner multi-year livelihoods strategy.
- Improve access to and opportunities for comprehensive **durable solutions** for refugees and asylum-seekers.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE OPERATION | USD

Contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 4 million**



BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of other broadly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region.

Australia for UNHCR 6.5 million | **UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe** 3.9 million | **Norway** 2.8 million
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UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 90.6 million | **Norway** 58.9 million | **España con ACNUR** 44 million | **Denmark** 37.8 million | **Netherlands (Kingdom of the)** 36.3 million | **France** 33.6 million | **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** 28.5 million | **Japan for UNHCR** 26.9 million | **Private donors in the Republic of Korea** 20.1 million | **Switzerland** 19.2 million | **Republic of Korea** 18 million | **Belgium** 14.2 million | **Ireland** 13.6 million | **Private donors in Italy** 12.9 million | **Australia** 10.7 million

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CONTACT

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