

**Executive Committee of the
High Commissioner's Programme**

Distr.: Restricted
27 February 2025

Original: English and French

Standing Committee
Ninety-second meeting

**UNHCR programme in the United Nations
proposed framework for 2026**

Summary

This paper contains an advance copy of UNHCR's draft programme in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 2026 (contained in annex I).

The draft programme will be reviewed by relevant bodies responsible for the approval of UNHCR's programme, which forms part of the United Nations regular budget, including the United Nations Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. Following the outcomes of the deliberations in these bodies, the United Nations regular budget will be considered for adoption by the General Assembly in December 2025.

The Standing Committee is, therefore, asked to take note of the draft programme through the adoption of the decision contained in annex II.

ADVANCE COPY

Extract

Eightieth session

Items 139 and 140 of the preliminary list*

Proposed programme plan for 2026 and programme performance in 2024**

Programme planning

Proposed programme budget for 2026

Part VI

Human rights and humanitarian affairs

Section 25

International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees

Programme 21

International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees

* [A/80/50](#).

** In keeping with paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution [77/267](#), the part consisting of the programme plan and programme performance information (part II) is submitted through the Committee for Programme and Coordination for the consideration of the Assembly.

Proposed programme plan for 2026 and programme performance in 2024

Overall orientation

Mandates and background

- 25.1 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for leading and coordinating international action for the protection of refugees and the search for solutions to their plight. Its mandate derives from relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions, including resolutions 319 A (IV), by which the Assembly established the Office, and [428 \(V\)](#), which sets out its statute. In addition, the international legal basis for the protection of refugees finds its principal expression in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967. UNHCR also has responsibilities for stateless persons pursuant to paragraph 6 (A) (ii) of its statute and article I (A) (2) of the 1951 Convention with regard to refugees who are stateless, as well as to various Assembly resolutions, including resolutions [3274 \(XXIX\)](#) and [31/36](#) in relation to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons of 1954 and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961. Over the years, the mandate of UNHCR has been extended to other groups through various Assembly resolutions. UNHCR provides protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, working in cooperation with the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and in the context of the collaborative response of the United Nations system, as well as with the consent of the State concerned.

Programme of work

International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees

Objective

- 25.2 The objective, to which this programme contributes, is to ensure international protection for refugees and other persons of concern¹ and to achieve durable solutions to their plight, in cooperation with States and other organizations, without discrimination.

Strategy and external factors for 2026

- 25.3 To contribute to the objective, UNHCR will, in close cooperation with national and local authorities, partners in the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, persons of concern, the private sector, development partners, academia, and other relevant stakeholders:
- (a) Swiftly and effectively respond to humanitarian crises, including in conflict-affected areas, by providing protection, humanitarian and life-saving assistance, while ensuring preparedness measures to respond to new emergencies with agility.
 - (b) Support implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, follow up on the implementation of pledges made at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum and advocate more active international solidarity and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing to support communities and countries hosting refugees.

¹ Other persons of concern include asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, stateless persons and internally displaced persons.

- (c) Advocate adherence by States to relevant international and regional instruments, including the refugee and statelessness conventions, while promoting and facilitating the admission and reception of refugees in accordance with internationally agreed standards.
 - (d) Enhance protection and assistance for internally displaced persons under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee coordination system, in line with relevant General Assembly resolutions, including [78/205](#)
 - (e) Advocate the prevention and reduction of statelessness, and the protection of stateless persons, including by promoting accession to the relevant international instruments to facilitate the acquisition or confirmation of nationality by stateless persons.
 - (f) Enhance the resilience of forcibly displaced persons and their host communities faced with the adverse effects of climate change and disasters, in consultation with national authorities and in cooperation with competent agencies.
- 25.4 By promoting inclusive and comprehensive approaches, UNHCR will contribute to the relevant goals contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that refugees and other persons of concern are not left behind in development processes ([A/AC.96/75/5](#), para. 56 and table I.16).
- 25.5 The above-mentioned work is expected to result in:
- (a) Significant advances in the response to refugee situations through more predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing and through a multi-stakeholder approach, consistent with the Global Compact on Refugees.
 - (b) Strengthened national asylum systems that are compliant with international legal standards.
 - (c) The advancement of solutions for forcibly displaced people, including voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement, while reaffirming the importance of support to facilitate sustainable reintegration in countries of origin.
 - (d) Reinforced solutions for stateless people, resulting in previously stateless individuals acquiring nationality or having their nationality confirmed.
 - (e) Improved access to protection and assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers through registration.
- 25.6 With regard to external factors, the plan for 2026 is based on the following assumptions:
- (a) Security conditions shall allow UNHCR to carry out its programmes.
 - (b) Humanitarian access will be granted in most countries, enabling UNHCR to respond to urgent protection and assistance needs.
 - (c) States and the international community at large will remain committed to contributing to and supporting the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, including the implementation of pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum.
 - (d) Asylum space and policies will not further restrict admissions in some countries.
 - (e) Voluntary funding from donors will match the budgeted needs to respond effectively and adequately to situations of forced displacement and statelessness.
- 25.7 Regarding cooperation with other entities at global, regional, national and local levels, UNHCR will continue to engage a wide range of partners in programme delivery. The Office will strengthen partnerships with local actors, regional organizations, organizations led by refugees and other persons of concern, and development actors and international financial institutions. This effort aims to advance the inclusion of displaced populations, including through United Nations programmes and national humanitarian and development policies and plans. Additionally, UNHCR will maintain feedback and response mechanisms as a means of consulting displaced and stateless people on its programmes. The Office will continue to invest in private-sector partnerships with a view to securing support for strategic, long-term responses. Efforts to address protection needs by empowering

affected communities and fostering their resilience and self-reliance until durable solutions are found will be a priority.

- 25.8 With regard to inter-agency coordination and liaison, UNHCR will continue to cooperate closely with resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators to ensure that overarching protection and solutions strategies are comprehensive. UNHCR will closely coordinate with other agencies, leveraging comparative advantages. This approach will strengthen synergies and maximize impact, enhancing inter-agency responses in cooperation with host countries. The Office will engage actively in relevant United Nations fora, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. Through its Institutional Plan on Solutions to Internal Displacement,² UNHCR will step up its engagement in situations of internal displacement.
- 25.9 UNHCR integrates a gender perspective in its operational activities, deliverables and results, as appropriate. UNHCR will remain fully committed to a non-discriminatory approach. The Office will strive to strengthen gender equality, including by preventing, mitigating and responding to gender-based violence against children, and by ensuring access to health care, psychosocial support, safe shelter and legal aid. The Office will also enhance collaboration with women-led organizations and strengthen strategic partnerships with development actors to this end. By addressing these challenges and seizing new opportunities, UNHCR aims to make a lasting impact on the protection of women and girls.
- 25.10 In line with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, UNHCR will work with a global network of persons of concern who are living with disabilities, in collaboration with relevant organizations. The Office will advocate that their disability considerations be taken into account in the context of international protection and promote their equal rights to social protection schemes.

Evaluation activities

- 25.11 The following evaluations completed in 2024 have guided the proposed programme plan for 2026:
- (a) Evaluations of UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement;
 - (b) UNHCR's decentralization and regionalization reform;
 - (c) Several country strategy evaluations;
 - (d) UNHCR's support to refugee health, education and economic inclusion in West and Central Africa;
 - (e) The inter-agency humanitarian evaluations of humanitarian responses in Afghanistan and Ethiopia;
 - (f) The Djibouti Declaration of the Regional Ministerial Conference on Refugee Education;
 - (g) Joint UNHCR/ UNICEF summative evaluation on best practices for refugee children.
- 25.12 In response to the results of the evaluations referenced above, the global evaluations of UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement and UNHCR's decentralization and regionalization reform are informing the implementation of global strategies in 2026. The inter-agency humanitarian evaluations of humanitarian responses in Afghanistan and Ethiopia are informing UNHCR's engagement under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, in particular its protection leadership role. Finally, evaluations of UNHCR's support to refugee health, education and economic inclusion in West and Central Africa, the evaluation of the Djibouti Declaration and the joint UNHCR and UNICEF summative evaluation on best practices for refugee children, will inform the planning for those specific programming areas.
- 25.13 Evaluations planned for 2026 include:
- (a) UNHCR's support for refugee employment and economic inclusion;
 - (b) UNHCR's response to emergencies;

² See <https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcr-institutional-plan-solutions-internal-displacement>.

- (c) Additional evaluations will be commissioned to look at specific programming areas as required.

Programme performance in 2024

Increased commitment to address statelessness

- 25.14 Stateless people often face difficulty accessing basic rights, such as education, health care, employment and freedom of movement. The UNHCR-led #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness concluded in 2024. Over the ten-year campaign, more than 560,000 stateless persons acquired nationality. The period also saw renewed commitment from States to prevent and respond to statelessness, demonstrated by a 25 per cent increase in accessions to the 1954 and 1961 statelessness conventions and over 500 pledges made through the Global Compact on Refugees by States and other actors.³ Despite notable progress and commitments, millions of people remain stateless or of undetermined nationality, and children continue to be born into statelessness.
- 25.15 In 2024, UNHCR launched a Global Alliance to End Statelessness.⁴ By the end of 2024, over 120 entities, including 23 States and 11 inter-governmental organizations, had become members of the Alliance, signaling continued strong global commitment to addressing statelessness.
- 25.16 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.I).

Figure 25.I

2022 (actual)	2023 (actual)	2024 (actual)
“_“	“_“	Between 2014 and 2024, more than 560,000 stateless persons acquired nationality and there was a 25 per cent increase in accessions to the 1954 and 1961 conventions on statelessness Over 120 entities joined the Global Alliance to End Statelessness in 2024

Planned results for 2026

Result 1: Enhanced inclusion of displaced people through digital cash payments

Programme performance in 2024 and target for 2026

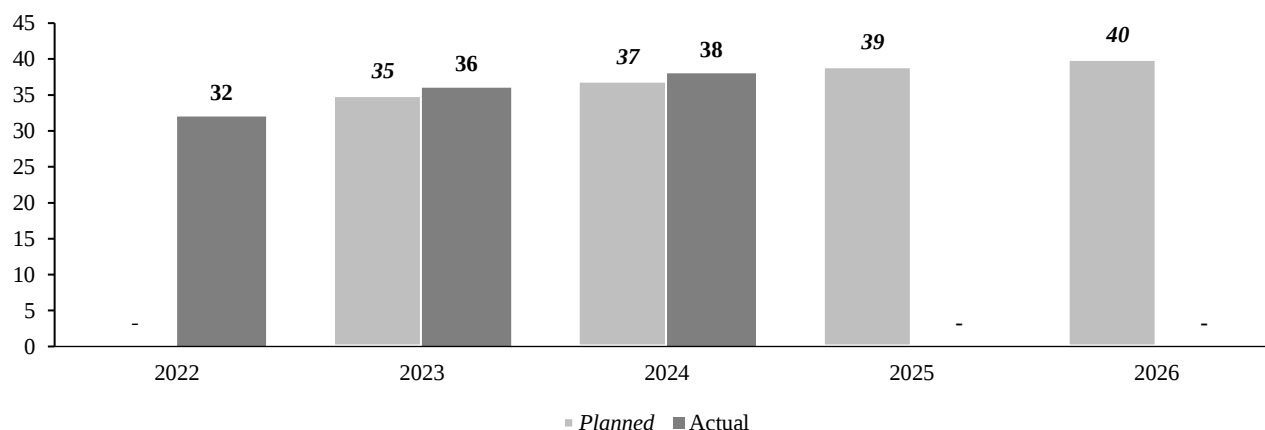
- 25.17 The programme’s work resulted in 38 per cent of UNHCR's cash recipients receiving cash through their own bank or mobile money account, which exceeded the planned target of 37 per cent.
- 25.18 Progress towards the objective and the target for 2026 are presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.II).

³ See [Pledges & Contributions | The Global Compact on Refugees | UNHCR](#)

⁴ See <https://statelessnessalliance.org/>

Figure 25.II

Performance measure: Percentage of forcibly displaced who are recipients of cash assistance through their own bank or mobile money accounts (annual)

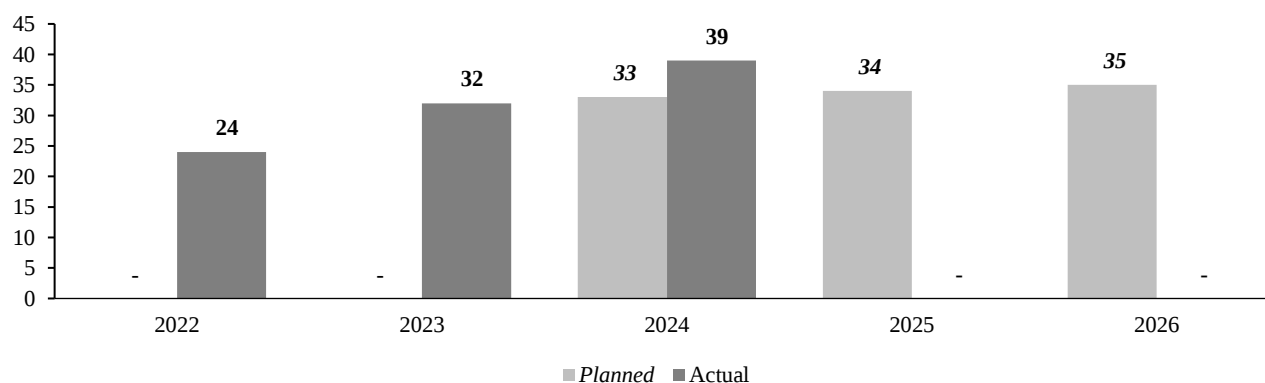


Result 2: Increased prevalence of national and local partners in refugee response plans globally
Programme performance in 2024 and target for 2026

- 25.19 The programme's work contributed to 39 per cent of national and local partners involved in the refugee response plans globally, which exceeded the planned target of 33 per cent.
- 25.20 Progress towards the objective and the target for 2026 are presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.III).

Figure 25.III

Performance measure: percentage of local and national operational partners in refugee response plans globally (as a proportion of all partners)



Result 3: Strengthened protection and access to services for refugees and asylum-seekers

Proposed programme plan for 2026

- 25.21 Individual registration, documentation and quality registration data are critical for the delivery of protection and assistance. The Digital Gateway⁵ initiative reflects UNHCR's efforts over the past few years to provide online access for displaced people to key information and services. This self-service solution offers functionalities such as scheduling registration appointments, accessing and updating personal data, and communicating with UNHCR through digital platforms. This approach accelerates registration, improves access to services, and redefines how UNHCR will deliver protection and assistance in the future.

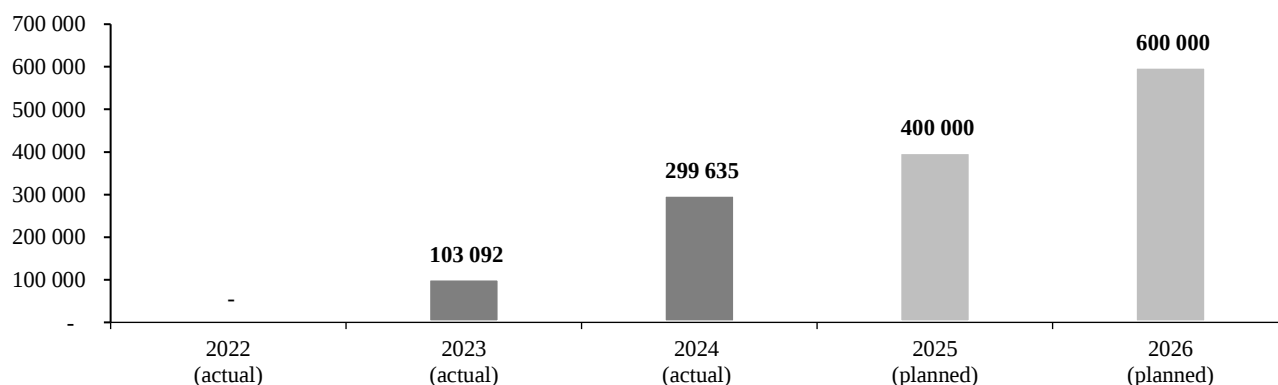
Lessons learned and planned change

- 25.22 The lesson for the programme was that the use of digital service tools could enable refugees and asylum-seekers to swiftly access support. The Office gained key insights from deploying Digital Gateway's registration appointment tool in Egypt in response to the Sudan emergency and in Indonesia to enhance registration processes. These initiatives emphasized the need for adaptability and automation to improve the effectiveness of the support. Applying these lessons, further pilot projects in 2025 will test and refine the functionalities across diverse contexts. The outcomes will inform adjustments to ensure the tool is fully optimized for its global rollout in 2026.

- 25.23 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.IV)

Figure 25.IV

Performance measure: Total number of persons of concern who have created digital accounts through the Digital Gateway (cumulative)
(Thousands of persons)



⁵ See <https://www.unhcr.org/digitalstrategy/the-digital-gateway/>

Legislative mandates

25.24 The list below, which was reviewed in the preparation of the proposed programme budget, provides all mandates entrusted to the Office.

General Assembly resolutions

319 A (IV)	Refugees and stateless persons	50/152; 73/151;	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
428 (V)	Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	79/156	
538 B (VI)	Assistance to and protection of refugees	58/153	Implementing actions proposed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to strengthen the capacity of his Office to carry out its mandate
1166 (XII)	International assistance to refugees within the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	70/1	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
46/108; 78/185	Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa	78/205	Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons

Conventions and conference declarations

Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1951, and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1967
 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954
 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961
 Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969

Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, 1984
 Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989
 San José Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons, 1994
 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, 2009

Deliverables

25.25 Table 25.1 lists all deliverables of UNHCR.

Table 25.1

Deliverables for the period 2024–2026, by category and subcategory

Category and subcategory	2024 planned	2024 actual	2025 planned	2026 planned
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	35	41	34	41
1. Reports of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the General Assembly	1	1	1	1
2. Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa	1	1	1	1
3. Report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the General Assembly	1	1	1	1
4. Annual note on international protection to the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner	1	1	1	1
5. Documents related to oversight issues, including UNHCR inspection and evaluation activities, submitted to the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner	7	7	7	7
6. Reports of the Standing Committee to the Executive Committee	3	3	3	3
7. Report to the General Assembly on the annual programme budget of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	1	1	1	1
8. Documents and conference room papers for the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee	20	26	19	26
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	28	28	30	30
Meetings of:				
9. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions	2	1	2	2
10. The Fifth Committee	1	1	1	1
11. The Committee for Programme and Coordination	1	1	1	1
12. The Executive Committee and Standing Committee	23	24	25	25
13. The Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	1	1	1	1
Documentation services for meetings (thousands of words)	200	200	200	200
14. Executive Committee and Standing Committee documents	200	200	200	200
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	9	13	9	11
15. On attaining a favourable protection environment, realizing rights in safe environments, empowering communities and securing solutions such as voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement	9	13	9	11
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	60	60	60	60
16. Training courses for government and implementing partners on emergency management, refugee law, protection and operations management	45	45	45	45
17. Seminars on programme areas for UNHCR implementing partners and government officials, including on the Global Compact on Refugees	15	15	15	15
Publications (number of publications)	32	32	22	32
18. Midyear and year-end trends of global forced displacement (formerly the Statistical Yearbook)	2	2	2	2
19. Publications on a range of protection-related themes	30	30	20	30

<i>Category and subcategory</i>	<i>2024 planned</i>	<i>2024 actual</i>	<i>2025 planned</i>	<i>2026 planned</i>
Fact-finding, monitoring and investigation missions (number of missions)	44	56	44	60
20. Monitoring missions on the implementation of the programme	40	40	40	40
21. Investigations related to cases accepted by the Inspector General's Office	4	16	4	20
Humanitarian assistance missions (number of missions)	75	155	130	160
22. Humanitarian assistance missions undertaken by the UNHCR senior executive team	75	155	130	160

C. Substantive deliverables

Consultation, advice and advocacy: advice on refugee protection and solutions, and on the rights of refugees, other forcibly displaced and stateless persons under international, regional and national law, to approximately 136 countries; support to the legislative processes of 80 countries; dialogue and consultations with partners including 126 non-governmental organizations and others.

Direct service delivery: protection services for approximately 14 million people; biometric registration for some 28 million refugees and asylum-seekers; the provision of shelter-related relief items for at least 600,000 people; legal aid to facilitate acquiring of nationality or having it confirmed; essential health-care services for some 10 million displaced people and comprehensive health care for women and girls;

D. Communication deliverables

Outreach programmes, special events and information materials: World Refugee Day; the 75th Anniversary of the signing of the 1951 Refugee Convention, the Nansen Refugee Award, an annual event recognizing individuals and organizations for their outstanding work for forcibly displaced and stateless people; communications on thematic priorities.

External and media relations: media and communications partnerships and media coverage on thematic areas, awareness-raising by almost 100 Goodwill Ambassadors, high-profile supporters and new influencers.

Digital platforms and multimedia content: approximately 40 stories that are co-led or co-produced with forcibly displaced and stateless people; UNHCR websites and UNHCR social media platforms.

Annex II

Draft decision on the UNHCR draft programme in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 2026

The Standing Committee,

Takes note of part VI, section 25, programme 21: International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees of the United Nations proposed programme budget for 2026.
