



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

GLOBAL REPORT

2023





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A guide to UNHCR's Global Report in 2023

The Global Report is our annual review of our activities and results. It shows how we were funded and tells the story of how forced displacement and statelessness developed during the year, how UNHCR acted in response and what challenges we faced. The elements of the Global Report 2023 are as follows:

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- [Southern Africa](#)
- [West and Central Africa](#)
- [The Americas](#)
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- [Europe](#)
- [Middle East and North Africa](#)

Annual Results Reports

For country and multi-country operations (available for 51 operations).

Major displacement situations in 2023

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- [Central African Republic situation](#)
- [Colombia situation](#)
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- [El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras situation](#)
- [Ethiopia situation \(Northern Ethiopia emergency\)](#)
- [Iraq situation](#)
- [Myanmar situation](#)
- [Sahel situation](#)
- [South Sudan situation](#)
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- [Venezuela situation](#)
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In north-western Burundi, High Commissioner Filippo Grandi visits a former refugee family who had returned home to Rugombo commune, in Cibitoke Province, and received materials from UNHCR to rebuild their house | © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

High Commissioner's foreword

In 2023, the number of forcibly displaced and stateless people rose to record highs, an unfortunate symptom of a world in turmoil marked by war, displacement, human rights violations, coups and natural disasters.

With increasing political polarization and paralysis, innocents are paying the highest price. Some crises, such as Ukraine and Gaza, gained – understandably – international attention. Others – regrettably – continued to fail to make it to the headlines: Sudan, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti... Last year alone, UNHCR declared 43 emergencies in 29 countries, and continued to respond to protracted situations all around the world.

In all these situations, and despite the significant challenges and increased humanitarian needs, we acted to protect, assist and empower forcibly displaced people through our own efforts and in partnership with others.

We worked tirelessly to overcome the numerous challenges – complex operational environments, misinformation and disinformation, xenophobia, funding incommensurate with humanitarian needs or increasingly conditional, and many others. We stood firm against situations threatening the core of international refugee protection, but also engaged, in pragmatic yet principled terms, with proposals that recognize challenges faced by States and communities. We intensified advocacy and efforts so that population movements, particularly those where refugees travel alongside migrants, are considered through a [route-based approach](#) that looks holistically at actions in countries of origin, transit, destination and return instead of focusing only on borders. Internally, we advanced our transformation and worked to ensure resources were prioritized for displaced and stateless people.

We are grateful to the States that keep their doors open to people forced to flee, often generously hosting refugees while struggling to address the needs of their own communities.

In 2023, we also welcomed the fact that resettlement figures have picked up again, which helped save lives and build brighter futures for 158,700 refugees in countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany, France, Norway, New Zealand and Finland.

At the same time, the root causes of displacement continued to remain unaddressed, and those fleeing for the first, second or sometimes third time overwhelmingly outnumbered the one million refugees and 5.1 million internally displaced people who went back to rebuild their lives in their places of origin. More people would follow the same path if support were available. As such, we remained steadfast in our commitment to advocate for the possibility of safe and dignified voluntary returns whenever feasible, including through political solutions to end prolonged and new conflicts.

Despite increasing commitments to address statelessness, including at the Global Refugee Forum, and the commendable efforts by many countries, some of the larger statelessness situations remain unaddressed or progress is slow. Millions of stateless persons continue to be deprived of access to basic rights and services, and only 32,150 people received a nationality in 2023.

We did, however, see remarkable efforts to foster the human development of displaced communities, with various initiatives around the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees into national systems and services. Countries such as Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Jordan, Mauritania, Mexico and Uganda have shown the value of bringing refugees into the job market – a subject explored in the World Bank's "[World Development Report](#)" in 2023. Another exciting new effort for inclusion is Kenya's "Shirika Plan," which was initiated in 2023 and aims to transform refugee camps into integrated municipalities over the next decade. Such initiatives need to be supported as well as celebrated. They can be a win-win for refugees

and host communities alike, by strengthening inclusive national systems, expanding local labour markets for all, and by making refugees more self-reliant and contributors to the local economy while helping reduce aid dependency and enabling more sustainable programming. This inclusive approach equally contributes to all durable solutions: educated and better-skilled refugees are much better placed to contribute to the development of their countries of origin, or to better integrate in a country of resettlement.

UNHCR's catalytic role was critical in bringing in other and new actors to respond to displacement situations, and in underscoring that countries hosting refugees provide a global public good and need to be supported. This was clearly felt in the Global Refugee Forum in December. Over 4,000 people, including more than 320 refugees, attended the event, representing States, civil society, faith-based actors, sport bodies, the private sector, development institutions, academics, local and regional governments and others. Through their engagement and more than 1,700 pledges of support, including 42 multi-stakeholder pledges bringing together all parts of society, and financial commitments of \$2.2 billion, they demonstrated their continued solidarity with refugees and stateless people.

The Global Refugee Forum showed us the power of multilateralism, and gave us hope. However, it also showed us that there is still much work to do. I am grateful to all the donors, hosts, and supporters, and I hope this report will testify to the extraordinary work my colleagues at UNHCR do every day in the service of refugees, displaced and stateless people. We recognize that there are, and there will still be, challenges ahead of us, but we remain undaunted. UNHCR will continue working to protect, respond, include, empower and solve. As we look forward, we trust we will also be able to count on you.



– Filippo Grandi
UNHCR High Commissioner

2023 in review

In 2023, UNHCR faced several major challenges.

The population it was mandated to protect and assist grew to yet another record: 122.6 million people in total, including refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, returnees and stateless people.

The funds available to it fell back from a peak reached in 2022, opening up a record funding gap, with an average of \$47 in funding for each of those 122.6 million people.

The number of emergencies forcing people to flee from their homes grew to a new high, with the outbreak of war in Sudan driving the largest displacement crisis of the year, one which needed far more support than it received.

Old crises did not get resolved, and the number of protracted refugee situations grew to 59, in 37 countries.

Against this challenging backdrop, UNHCR and its partners helped to bring about significant achievements and advances that feature in this Global Report.

To protect forcibly displaced and stateless people, UNHCR spoke up for their rights and advocated for States to align their laws and policies with the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol, the stateless conventions and other relevant international instruments. UNHCR saw progress on this, and in its efforts to ensure people had the documentation needed to exercise their rights. UNHCR registered more than 2.5 million people, including in extreme

and adverse circumstances, such as Sudanese fleeing into Chad. Although asylum numbers grew globally, UNHCR worked to help States process applications and conducted refugee status determination under its own mandate in around 50 countries, reducing the average wait time overall. UNHCR also intervened in legal cases and worked with its partners to provide legal advice to people who have been forced to flee, and to improve the data on their access to justice. It pressed States to improve detention conditions, end child immigration detention, and detain asylum-seekers and refugees only as a measure of last resort.

UNHCR led the gender-based violence response in 45 displacement settings, providing safe spaces, training, and case management for survivors. It also provided protection services to 7 million children, including helping unaccompanied and separated children and supporting child-friendly procedures, and it finalized its first [“Policy on child protection”](#). UNHCR also provided targeted support to nearly 41,000 older persons and 480,000 persons with disabilities.

Overall, 19.3 million people received protection services in 163 countries.

UNHCR responded to the needs of people who had been forced to flee, providing assistance directly to millions and striving to improve the conditions affecting them, including their access to housing, clean water, health care, education, clean cooking fuel, and employment. Amidst a high prevalence of poverty, often far exceeding poverty rates in the host population, UNHCR delivered more than \$760 million in cash assistance to 7.3 million people in over 110 countries, and 8.1 million people received non-

food items. 14.6 million people benefited from UNHCR-supported health services, and 2.9 million people received shelter and housing assistance. An estimated 72% of refugee and asylum-seeking children were enrolled in primary education, but only 45% in secondary. At tertiary level, refugees' 7% enrolment rate remained far below global averages but far higher than the 1% where it stood as recently as 2019.

With many people displaced or stateless for years or even decades, UNHCR made the case with governments to include refugees and asylum-seekers in State systems and services, rather than letting them subsist for years on humanitarian aid. More and more, it seems that case is being heard, with forced displacement seen increasingly as a development issue. 5.8 million refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from government social protection programmes, and 67% of refugees had a legal right to work, up from 52% in 2021. UNHCR's efforts to encourage financial inclusion of refugees also bore fruit, with more people able to open a bank account and participate in the local economy.

UNHCR worked to empower forcibly displaced and stateless people. It supported refugee-led organizations, refugee innovation, refugee youth, and women's involvement in leadership and decision-making. It sought to involve forcibly displaced and stateless people in decisions affecting them. Almost 48,000 people took part in participatory assessments run by 76 of UNHCR's country operations. 20 operations facilitated engagement with displaced LGBTIQ+ people, and 63 operations aimed to meet their needs, via targeted or mainstreamed support. UNHCR's hotlines, [Help](#) websites and social media channels provided two-way communication, with information to help people stay safe, know their legal rights, and make the best decisions for

themselves and their families. Help sites in 136 countries recorded 10 million visitors and facilitated at least 30,000 referrals to services. UNHCR also launched a "Digital Gateway", the beginning of a shift from in-person services towards more digital services.

UNHCR sought solutions to situations of forced displacement and statelessness

and facilitated almost 100,000 resettlements of refugees, a third year of growth. Although relatively few people globally were able to return to their place of origin in safety and dignity, UNHCR supported hundreds of thousands who found themselves making the journey in adverse circumstances. UNHCR also laid the foundations for future returns by supporting regional coalitions that seek to bring about solutions, and helping to create a [solutions support platform](#) for the Central African Republic. UNHCR also sought to promote the local integration of refugees, and there were notable improvements in 2023, including in refugees' access to land for agriculture, property rights and opportunities for self-reliance. In Kenya, it supported the launch of the [Shirika plan](#), an important strategic shift to integrate refugee settlements into the local community over the coming decade.

UNHCR invested strategically to bolster the evidence base available to policymakers and development actors, paving the way for major advances in statistics on subjects such as statelessness, internal displacement and the links between climate and displacement.

The Global Refugee Forum showed the strength of global solidarity, turning determination to tackle forced displacement and statelessness into real action that will deliver results in the next four years.

UNHCR achieved this despite real difficulties in resourcing its budget of \$10.929 billion.

By year's end, this budget was just over 52% funded, compared to 58% in 2022, with the very significant decrease in contributions from 2022 driven mostly by a drop in donors who had come forward to support the Ukraine crisis and characterized as well by a drop in softly earmarked funding. The decrease meant UNHCR faced heightened difficulties in meeting the many and pressing needs of forcibly displaced people worldwide, left gaps in its assistance, and meant it had to accelerate measures to realign and reorganize its staffing and operational footprint.

In 2016 UNHCR launched its internal reform process.

Many structural and procedural decisions and reforms have been taken, including regionalisation and decentralisation, as well as systems and process reforms, to make it as efficient and effective as possible in the delivery of protection and assistance. As part of this, it had always been intended to undertake a further review of posts and realign functions to avoid duplication or gaps.

As 2022 came to an end, and in light of forecasting and planning for 2023, UNHCR assessed that in addition to facing an increasingly uncertain and shifting financial landscape, additional efforts were required to bring more efficiency and cost reductions. These efforts factored into the ongoing transformation process. Given donor forecasts, amongst other elements, UNHCR accelerated its realignment and rationalization process through a transformation lens in 2023, allowing operations and Bureaux to further readjust decentralization and regionalization based on the previous three year implementation. Bureaux and Headquarters worked together with operations to implement realignment and rationalization of staffing for 2023, which resulted in a 10% reduction of positions at Headquarters and operations. The review of positions was also accompanied by an in-depth review of UNHCR's operational footprint, which led to consolidating or closing 40 field presences in Africa, the Americas and Europe.



A brighter future begins with a home. In Fati Abad, Nangarhar, Afghanistan, UNHCR and WAW are building permanent shelters for refugee returnees, providing safety, stability, and hope for children and families rebuilding their lives. © UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production

Snapshot of the year

JAN

UNHCR, UNFPA and UNICEF [join up](#) to improve the protection of refugee and host communities, affected by vast **floods in Pakistan**, especially children and women. UNHCR [provides life-saving assistance](#) to thousands fleeing the latest violence in the eastern **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, including emergency shelter for over 1,000 families of persons with disabilities, pregnant women and those with other vulnerabilities. After an alarming rise in deaths of **Rohingya** refugees at sea, UNHCR calls for a [regional response](#) to address **deadly sea journeys**. Humanitarian access in **Ethiopia's** Tigray region [starts to improve](#) after a peace agreement. UNHCR joins other UN agencies in [calling for](#) urgent action on **malnutrition**. A [Regional PSEA and Safeguarding Network](#) for the **Ukraine** refugee situation is launched, co-chaired by UNHCR and Save the Children.

MAR

Tropical Cyclone Freddy lashes **Malawi** and **Mozambique**, destroying homes and crops and displacing over 840,000 people. In Brussels, the **African Union**, **European Union** and UN push for urgent action to address the pressing needs of migrants and refugees in **Libya**. The security situation in the eastern **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (DRC) continues to deteriorate rapidly, overwhelming internal displacement sites and pushing people to flee to **Rwanda**. UNHCR declares an L1 emergency for Rwanda and an L2 for the DRC. On 3 March UNHCR also declares an internal L1 for **Benin**, **Côte d'Ivoire**, **Ghana** and **Togo** as the deteriorating security situation in **Burkina Faso** exacerbates the existing food crisis.



MAY

A ground-breaking new law comes into force in **Kyrgyzstan**, [reducing statelessness](#) by ensuring every child will have the right to a birth certificate. **Somalia** sees 1 million people displaced in the space of just 130 days, a record rate of displacement for the country. **Cyclone Mocha** makes landfall in **Myanmar**, affecting an estimated 7.9 million people, 3.4 million of whom need humanitarian assistance. The cyclone affects an area of **Bangladesh** where 2.3 million people reside, including 930,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. UNHCR declares an internal L2 emergency for both countries. **Costa Rica**, **Guatemala**, **Honduras**, **Mexico** and **Panama** experience a significant escalation in mixed and onward movements, with a conservative estimate of over 870,000 people on the move, prompting UNHCR to declare an L1 emergency for those countries. UNHCR [issues a new position](#) on returns to **Sudan**.

FEB

UNHCR releases the new [Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response](#) which sets the framework for UNHCR's preparedness and response activities. UNHCR launches an emergency response and declares a Level 2 (L2) emergency after 1.7 million refugees and 5.3 million IDPs are among those affected by **earthquakes in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic**. As the Horn of Africa enters a sixth **failed rainy season**, High Commissioner [Grandi visits Alemwach](#), a site hosting 22,000 **Eritrean** refugees in **Ethiopia**, which the Government plans to integrate into public services. Fighting from a political dispute in Laascaanood, **Somalia**, forces [hundreds of thousands of people](#) to flee, and almost **100,000 refugees cross the border** into **Ethiopia**. UNHCR declares an L2 emergency for Ethiopia on 21 February.



APR

Conflict erupts in **Sudan**, in what will become the biggest displacement emergency of 2023, forcing nearly **7.2 million people** from their homes by the end of the year, exacerbating an already grave humanitarian crisis. In consequence, UNHCR declares emergencies for **Sudan**, **South Sudan**, **Egypt**, **Chad**, **Ethiopia** and the **Central African Republic** in April and May. **Brazil** notches up five years of its relocation strategy, having moved more than 100,000 **Venezuelan** refugees and migrants to cities with **better prospects for jobs**, housing and education.



JUN

A summit co-convened by UNHCR seeks action to tackle [gender-discriminatory nationality laws](#). UNHCR and IOM call for decisive action to prevent **deaths at sea** after as many as 750 people are feared drowned in the latest **Mediterranean tragedy**. In Morocco, the [Rabat Declaration](#) is a groundbreaking political step to improve the **health of refugees and migrants**. UNHCR and the **World Bank** sign a [data-sharing agreement](#). **The United States**, **Guatemala**, **Colombia** and **Costa Rica** announce the initial phase of the [Safe Mobility Offices](#), to facilitate access to protection and other lawful pathways to the United States and other countries. A [conference in Spain](#) pushes for action on **statelessness in Europe**.

JUL

Kenya grants citizenship to 7,000 members of the **Pemba community**, ending their **statelessness** and giving them access to education, health care, social protection, financial services and the formal labour market. **UNHCR and FIFA** sign a landmark Memorandum of Understanding to deepen their relationship and use soccer to strengthen support for forcibly displaced and stateless people, part of UNHCR's **sport strategy**. UNHCR and OHCHR issue a **joint press release** on the **United Kingdom's** Illegal Migration Bill. As the humanitarian situation in **Sudan** continues to deteriorate, UNHCR upgrades emergency declarations for **Sudan, South Sudan, Egypt and Chad** to an L3. **IKEA Foundation commits to help** UNHCR offices transition to **solar energy**. UNHCR **issues a new position** on returns to **Burkina Faso**.



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SEP

With 2 million refugees needing resettlement globally, **UNHCR urges States** to emulate a U.S. plan to **resettle 125,000 refugees** over 12 months. UNHCR and WHO warn of deteriorating **health conditions in Sudan** after 1,200 children die of suspected measles and malnutrition. As the number of refugees in **Chad** doubles, High Commissioner Grandi praises the country's **reception of Sudanese refugees**, but says more aid is desperately needed. UNHCR races to **help people in Libya** after **Storm Daniel** displaces 42,000 and kills at least 4,000, although the **community comes together** to cope with the shock and harrowing losses from the floods. Following a flare-up of decades-long conflict in **Karabakh**, over **100,000 people flee to Armenia within a week** and UNHCR declares an L1 emergency for Armenia. UNHCR's **Education Report** reveals that 7 million refugee children are **out of school**.

NOV

UNHCR distributes emergency items and cash after **floods** displace over 1 million people in **Somalia** and **Ethiopia**, many of whom had already fled from conflict and drought in Somalia. UNHCR welcomes a **Supreme Court judgment** in the **United Kingdom** on the transfer of asylum-seekers to **Rwanda**. The Global Compact on Refugees "**Indicator report**" shows sustained progress on four objectives: easing pressure on host countries; enhancing refugee self-reliance; expanding access to third-country solutions; and supporting conditions in countries of origin. UNHCR declares an L2 emergency for **Afghanistan** and **Pakistan**. A new **Solutions Support Platform** is launched for the **Central African Republic** situation.



© UNHCR/Kisut Gebre Egziabher

AUG

UNHCR joins UNICEF and IOM in deploring yet another **Mediterranean shipwreck**, in which dozens are thought to have died. **Angola** resumes refugee registration activities after an eight-year suspension. IASC activates its System-Wide Scale-Up for **Sudan**. Following a coup in **Niger**, UNHCR declares an L1 emergency for **Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Mali and Chad** due to the risk that the deteriorating security situation might lead to further displacement within Niger and refugee flows to neighbouring countries.



© UNHCR/Alessio Mamo

OCT

The **Intergovernmental Authority on Development's** Policy Framework on Refugee Protection ushers in a harmonized approach to refugee management and asylum. **The Republic of the Congo**, where 200,000 people are at risk of statelessness, **accedes to the Statelessness conventions**. UNHCR and UNICEF sound the alarm about violent clashes in eastern **DRC**, after **450,000 people are forcibly displaced** in six weeks, many of them cut off from UN aid efforts. UNHCR announces that enrolment of refugees in **tertiary education** has hit 7%, almost halfway to the **15by30** goal. Conflict breaks out in **Gaza** and UNHCR declares an L1 emergency for **Egypt and Lebanon**. Two powerful **earthquakes** strike Herat Province, **Afghanistan**, killing more than 1,400 people, destroying 10,000 homes and placing 114,000 people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. The Government of **Pakistan** announces it will deport all undocumented people residing in the country by **1 November**. More than 478,800 Afghans return to Afghanistan before the end of the year, including over 29,000 deported by Pakistani authorities. The High Commissioner **briefs the UN Security Council**.

DEC

\$2.2 billion in pledges to improve lives of refugees and hosts communities are announced at the **Global Refugee Forum**. UNHCR's "**Global survey on livelihoods and economic inclusion**" shows that 45% of refugees live in countries with unrestricted **access to formal employment**, up from 18% in 2019, and more than half of refugees have the legal right to open a bank account, a crucial step towards financial inclusion. Refugee activists **speak up** at **COP28**. The "**15by30 roadmap**" outlines paths to boost refugee enrolment in **higher education**. **Clashes** in Wad Madani, capital of **Sudan's** Al Jazirah State, cause the swift displacement of 300,000 people in an area previously considered safe. The number of refugees and migrants crossing the **Darien jungle** between South and Central America reaches 500,000. UNHCR and IOM **call for** a comprehensive regional approach based on cooperation and solidarity. Human rights experts launch the **PIERR platform** to coordinate advocacy for the **protection** of refugees.

UNHCR in 2023

To protect and assist a growing population of forcibly displaced and stateless people of 122.6 million (+5.5% compared to 2022) in 136 countries and territories



UNHCR's needs-based budget was \$10.929 billion (+2.0%)



We received \$4.880 billion of voluntary contributions (-16.6%)



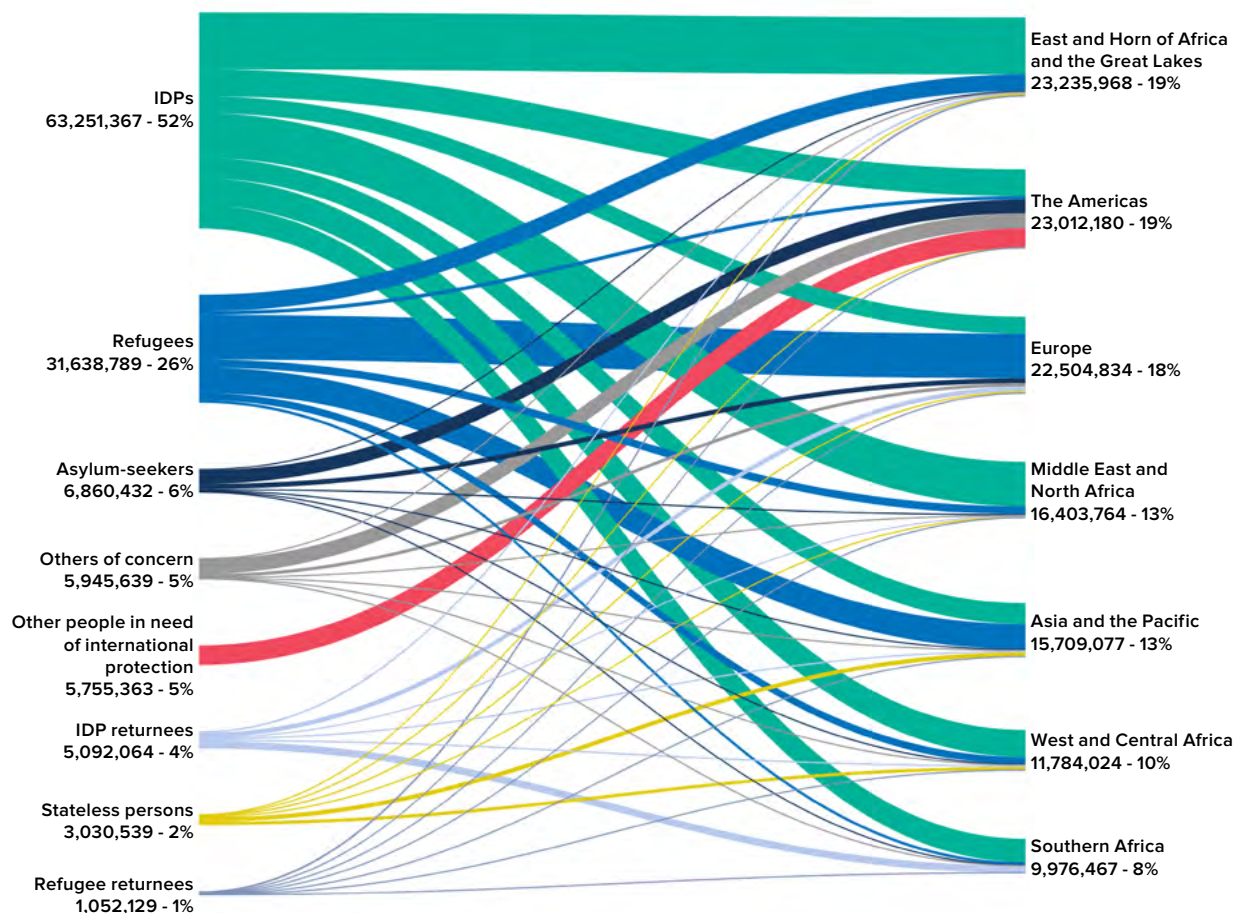
And we spent \$5.167 billion (-7.9%)

Population overview

Forcibly displaced and stateless people by region¹ | 2023

Global total = 122.6 million

For a breakdown of population types by country and region, download the spreadsheet [here](#) (sheet T1).



Forcibly displaced and stateless populations by gross national income per capita of host nations² | 2023

(Host nations of forcibly displaced and stateless people at the end of 2023, with host nations grouped according to gross national income per capita)

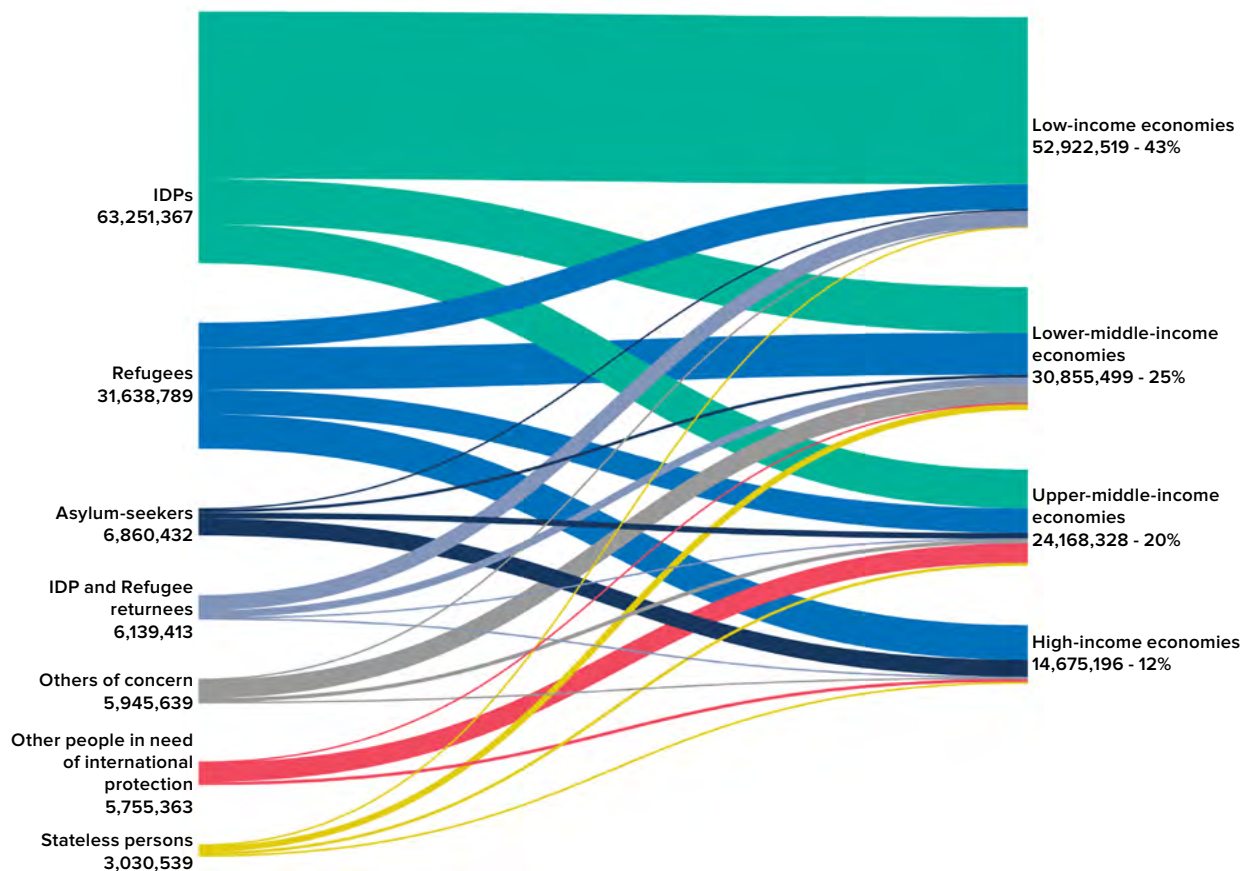
Low-income economies = \$1,135 or less

Low-middle-income economies = \$1,136 to \$4,465

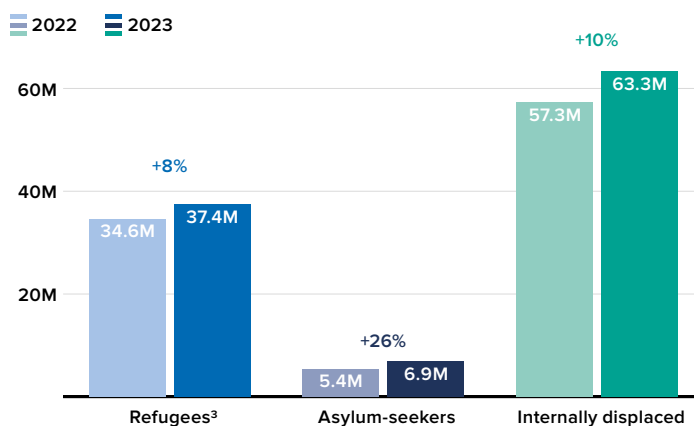
Upper-middle-income economies = \$4,466 to \$13,845

High-income economies = \$13,846 or more

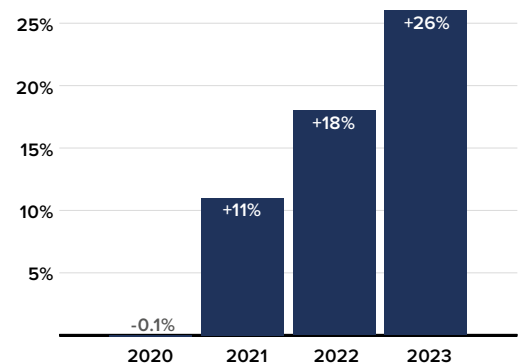
² 4,780 refugee returnees not counted in this chart due to unknown countries.



Population growth | 2022-2023



Growth of asylum-seeker numbers (%) | 2020-2023



Multisectoral monitoring results | 2023 year-end figures

Reporting period 1 January-31 December 2023

Protection

 **19.3 million**

people received protection services⁵

Refugees / asylum-seekers: **9.9M**

Internally displaced persons: **6.5M**

Others of concern: **2.9M**

Countries reporting: **163**
2022 result: 21.2M in 154 countries

 **72%**

of countries where specialized gender-based violence services are available to displaced and stateless people who are survivors

Countries reporting: **122**
2022 result: 73% of 131 countries

 **7 million**

children received protection services⁵

Refugees / asylum-seekers: **3.8M**

Internally displaced persons: **2.1M**

Others of concern: **1.1M**

Countries reporting: **163**
2022 result: 8.4M in 154 countries

 **76%**

of countries had child protection services⁶ available to displaced and stateless children

Countries reporting: **126**
2022 result: 78% of 125 countries

Social protection

 **5.8 million**

refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from government social protection programmes⁷

Countries reporting: **81**
2022 result: 6.2M in 70 countries

Accountability to affected people

 **67%**

of targeted countries had a multi-channel feedback and response system that was designed based on consultations with displaced and stateless people

Countries reporting: **132**
2022 result: 69% in 144 countries

Basic needs

 **7.3 million**

people received cash assistance

Countries reporting: **110**
2022 result: 9.8M in 110 countries

 **8.1 million**

people received non-food items, including core relief items⁸

Countries reporting: **72**
Indicator not available in 2022

Shelter

 **2.9 million**

people received shelter and housing assistance⁹

Countries reporting: **67**
Indicator not available in 2022

Health

 **14.6 million**

people received essential health care services

Countries reporting: **77**
2022 result: 12M in 85 countries

 **1.5 million**

women and girls received sexual and reproductive health services¹⁰

Countries reporting: **51**
2022 result: 994,000 in 57 countries

 **1.3 million**

people received mental health and psychosocial support services

Countries reporting: **99**
2022 result: 1.1M in 82 countries

Nutrition

 **191,000**

children 6-59 months were admitted for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM)

Countries reporting: **33**
2022 result: 140,000 in 37 countries

 **95,000**

children 6-59 months were admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)

Countries reporting: **34**
2022 result: 72,500 in 37 countries

165 countries participated in the reporting

Source: UNHCR Multisectoral Monitoring
Feedback: hqfr00@unhcr.org

⁵"Protection services" encompasses a vast range of community-based, individual and household interventions in various domains of UNHCR protection work, including counselling and information on rights, sensitization on protection issues, community outreach and mobilization, specialized services for children or other persons with specific needs, gender-based violence programming, legal assistance, registration and documentation, Refugee status determination and resettlement case-work, protection monitoring.


⁶Child protection services include support through Best Interests Procedures for children at risk, targeted support for children with specific needs and children in alternative care, support through family tracing and reunification, and reintegration support for children associated with armed groups and forces.

⁷The social protection indicator relies on official national data, which are often unavailable or not disaggregated by legal status. Also, this indicator does not mean full inclusion in the national social protection system, as refugees' access might be restricted to one or more specific programs or subject to a designated period of residence in a particular location. Despite having access to social protection programs, refugees may face additional challenges.

⁸This indicator reflects the total number of people who benefited from the direct distribution of in-kind non-food items, including domestic core relief items (CRIs) and excluding shelter CRIs.

⁹Shelter and housing assistance includes emergency, transitional and durable shelter provision, collective shelter, shelter repair and maintenance, and rental programming.

¹⁰Sexual and reproductive health services include antenatal care, assisted delivery, postnatal care, family planning services and health services for survivors of gender-based violence.

A close-up portrait of a woman, Hawa, looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a headscarf with a bold pattern of black, white, and teal. The background is a blurred, dry, brownish landscape.

Story from the cover

Hawa | Sudanese refugee in Ethiopia

Hawa, 40, fled the conflict in Sudan in June 2023 and now lives at the Kurmuk transit centre in northwestern Ethiopia with her mother and children.

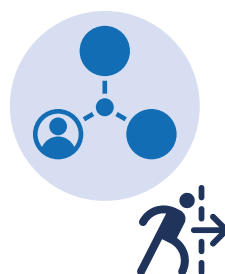
"We were terrified and it was raining, there was no food along the way. We had nothing, we left everything behind."

When they started hearing the shots in their village, Hawa and her family ran away and had to walk for three hours to seek safety. When they arrived in Ethiopia, they had only two Sudanese pounds to buy biscuits for the children.

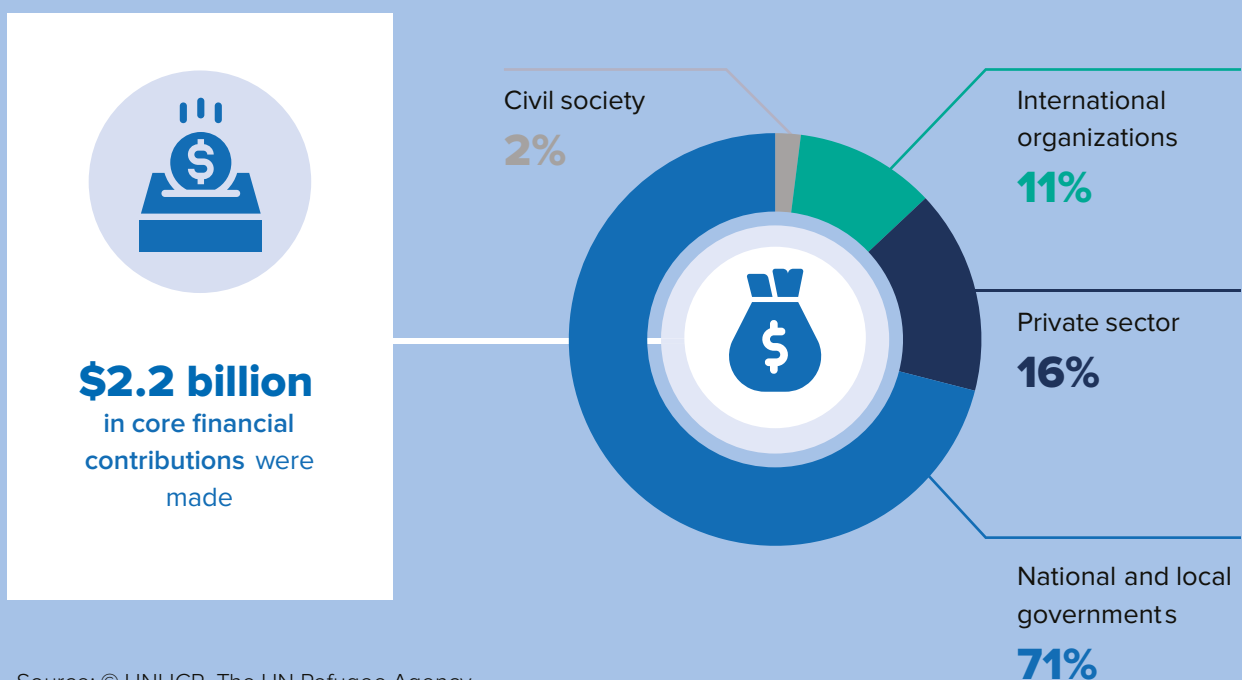
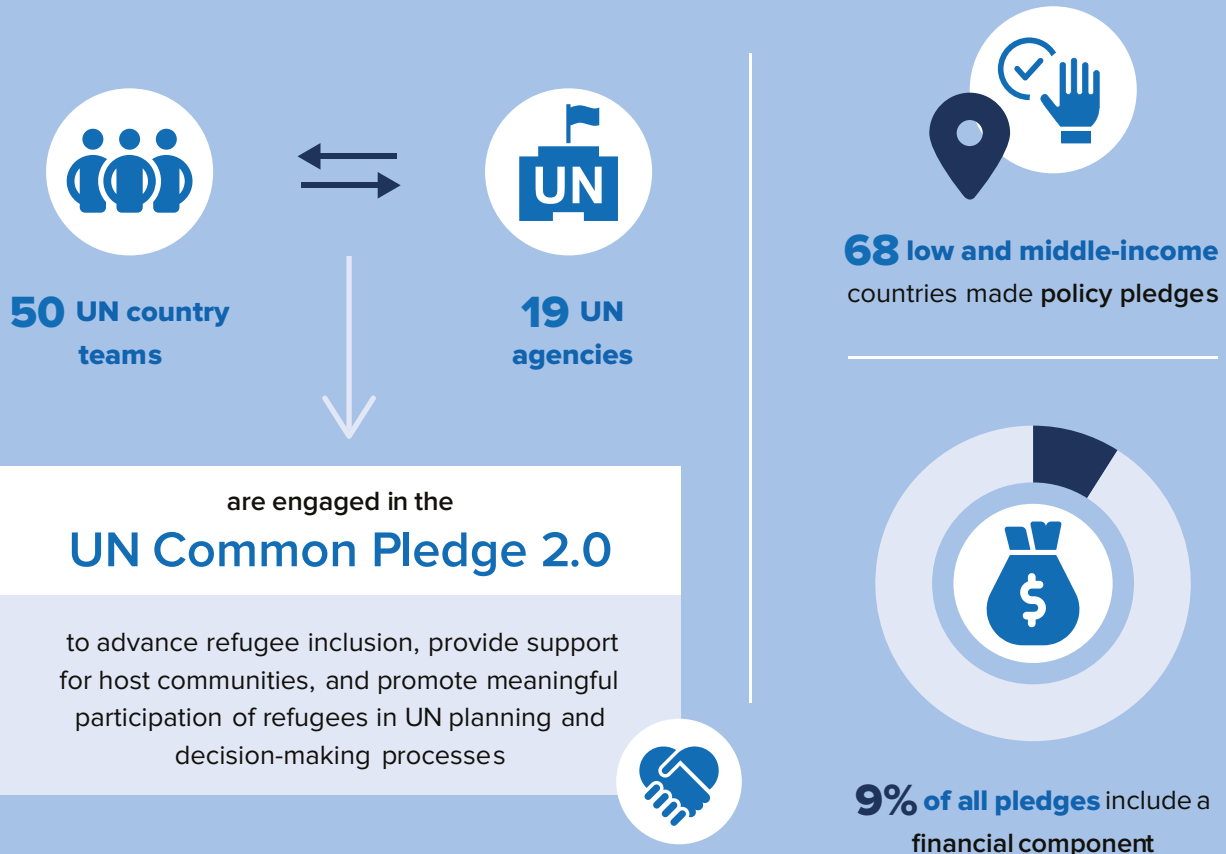
"When we got here, we were relieved. We are okay now."

[See the video](#)

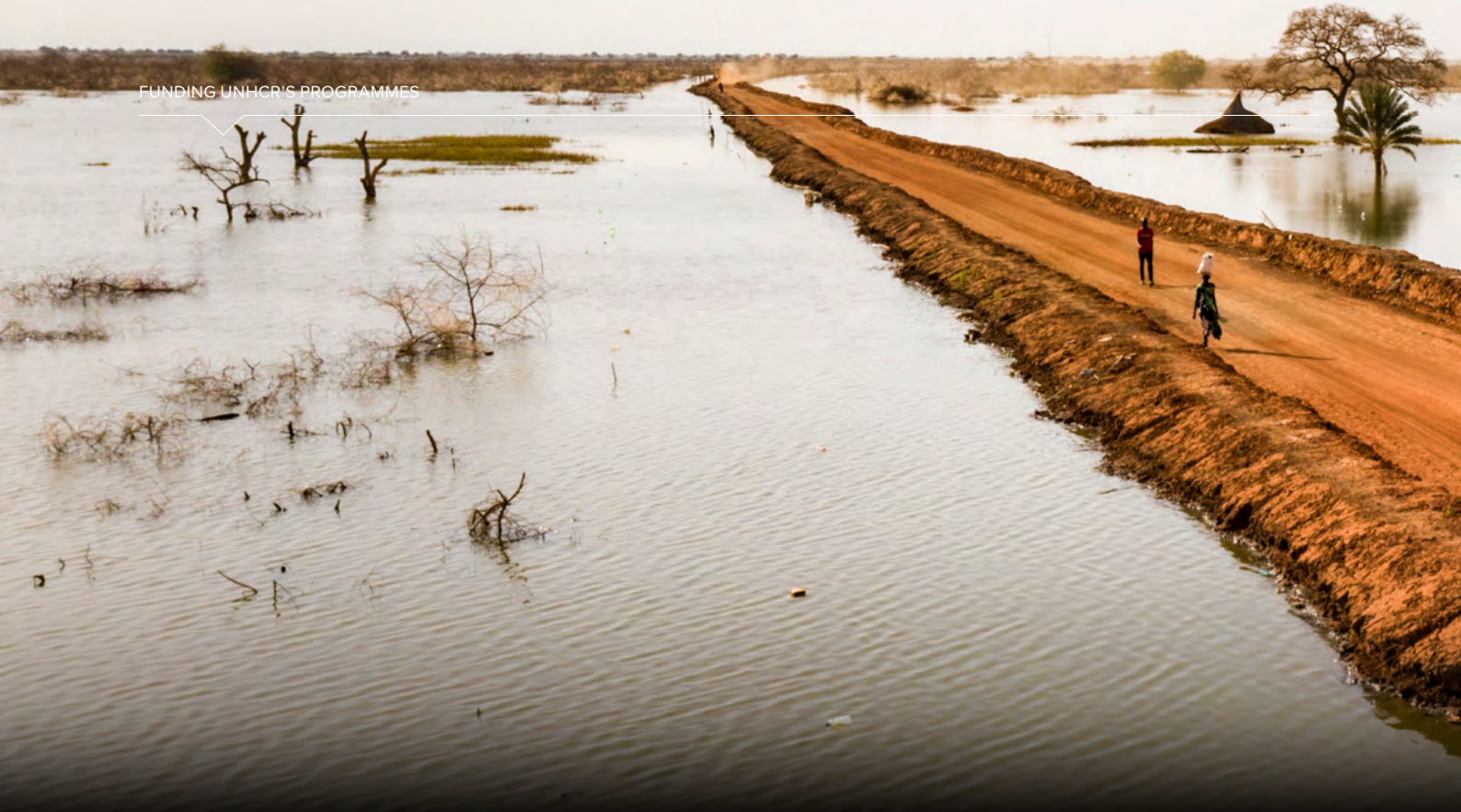
PLEDGES AT THE GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM 2023



Following the successful 2019 pledge, **116 stakeholders** from the global legal community committed to provide **1,000,000** hours of pro bono legal advice



Source: © UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency



A road protected by dikes cuts through floodwater that stretches all the way to the horizon, near Bentiu, South Sudan. South Sudan has now seen four years of historic flooding. Unity State, where Bentiu is located, has been hit by massive floods, with water overwhelming ancestral homes, farmlands, and the transhumance routes cattle herders have followed for thousands of years. Bentiu is now hosting 360,000 people who have fled due to flooding and who are now stuck, permanently displaced by climate change. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

Funding UNHCR's programmes in 2023

UNHCR's final 2023 **budget** was \$10.929 billion, having increased from the original 2023 budget of \$10.211 billion. Financial requirements for programmed activities amounted to \$10.463 billion, which was \$188 million or almost 2% higher than the \$10.275 billion required in 2022.

Five **supplementary budgets** totalling \$817.5 million were added during the year: \$250 million for the Ukraine situation; \$201.3 million for the response to the earthquake in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic; \$268.7 million for the Sudan situation; \$55.8 million for the Pakistan situation; and \$41.7 million for the Somalia situation.

There was also a **budget reduction** of \$100 million in Iraq, reflecting the alignment of the UNHCR programme with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and an increased focus on inclusion in development interventions and national planning. To the extent of funds available, UNHCR intends to continue its support in Iraq towards strengthening the capacities of public institutions to deliver relevant services.

In 2023, **expenditure decreased** by 7.9% to \$5.166 billion, leading to an implementation rate (expenditure over total funds available) of 90.4%, compared to 91% in 2022.

Funds available reached \$5.716 billion leaving an overall funding gap – funds available compared to the needs-based budget of \$10.929 billion – of 47.7%, compared to 42.3% in 2022.



2023 Budget and expenditure overview | USD

REGION		1. Protect	2. Respond	3. Empower	4. Solve	TOTAL	% of Global	% of progr. activities	
EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA AND THE GREAT LAKES	Budget	558,281,727	1,076,603,668	307,313,482	218,492,302	2,160,691,178	20%	21%	
	Expenditure	231,899,940	469,717,387	96,428,085	77,249,454	875,294,866	17%	17%	
SOUTHERN AFRICA	Budget	175,567,228	125,644,369	78,862,327	91,632,801	471,706,725	4%	5%	
	Expenditure	68,378,637	58,734,842	29,007,643	22,117,125	178,238,247	3%	3%	
WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA	Budget	271,120,546	503,592,740	156,413,564	133,827,763	1,064,954,613	10%	10%	
	Expenditure	127,192,076	242,272,804	57,714,431	55,055,203	482,234,513	9%	9%	
THE AMERICAS	Budget	279,043,563	253,213,368	83,937,672	211,237,278	827,431,880	8%	8%	
	Expenditure	144,123,534	102,584,083	30,377,002	78,050,261	355,134,880	7%	7%	
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC	Budget	237,081,720	402,430,808	248,654,014	126,818,319	1,014,984,861	9%	10%	
	Expenditure	125,063,493	219,055,468	154,551,768	76,436,139	575,106,868	11%	11%	
EUROPE	Budget	632,094,552	776,634,205	123,515,432	161,288,826	1,693,533,015	15%	16%	
	Expenditure	430,157,639	511,342,737	23,818,314	81,424,150	1,046,742,840	20%	20%	
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	Budget	360,293,845	1,677,700,626	287,957,180	115,687,360	2,441,639,010	22%	23%	
	Expenditure	216,448,075	573,953,554	124,849,796	58,972,394	974,223,819	19%	19%	
SUBTOTAL COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMES		Budget	2,513,483,181	4,815,819,783	1,286,653,670	1,058,984,649	9,674,941,282	89%	92%
		Expenditure	1,343,263,393	2,177,660,874	516,747,040	449,304,726	4,486,976,033	87%	87%
Global programmes	Budget	125,168,162	274,544,476	65,673,702	53,663,086	519,049,426	5%	5%	
	Expenditure	116,984,552	224,893,473	45,003,401	39,129,863	426,011,288	8%	8%	
Headquarters	Budget	62,927,643	146,038,174	33,017,112	26,978,838	268,961,767	2%	3%	
	Expenditure	69,425,493	126,645,626	26,707,657	23,221,955	246,000,732	5%	5%	
SUBTOTAL PROGRAMMED ACTIVITIES		Budget	2,701,578,985	5,236,402,433	1,385,344,484	1,139,626,572	10,462,952,475	96%	100%
		Expenditure	1,529,673,438	2,529,199,973	588,458,098	511,656,544	5,158,988,053	100%	100%
Operational Reserve		Budget				453,759,378	4%		
JPO	Budget					12,000,000	0%		
	Expenditure					7,566,659	0%		
TOTAL		Budget	2,701,578,985	5,236,402,433	1,385,344,484	1,139,626,572	10,928,711,853	100%	
		Expenditure	1,529,673,438	2,529,199,973	588,458,098	511,656,544	5,166,554,712	100%	

For more details on each regional budget and expenditure, please refer to the [regional overviews](#).



Budget

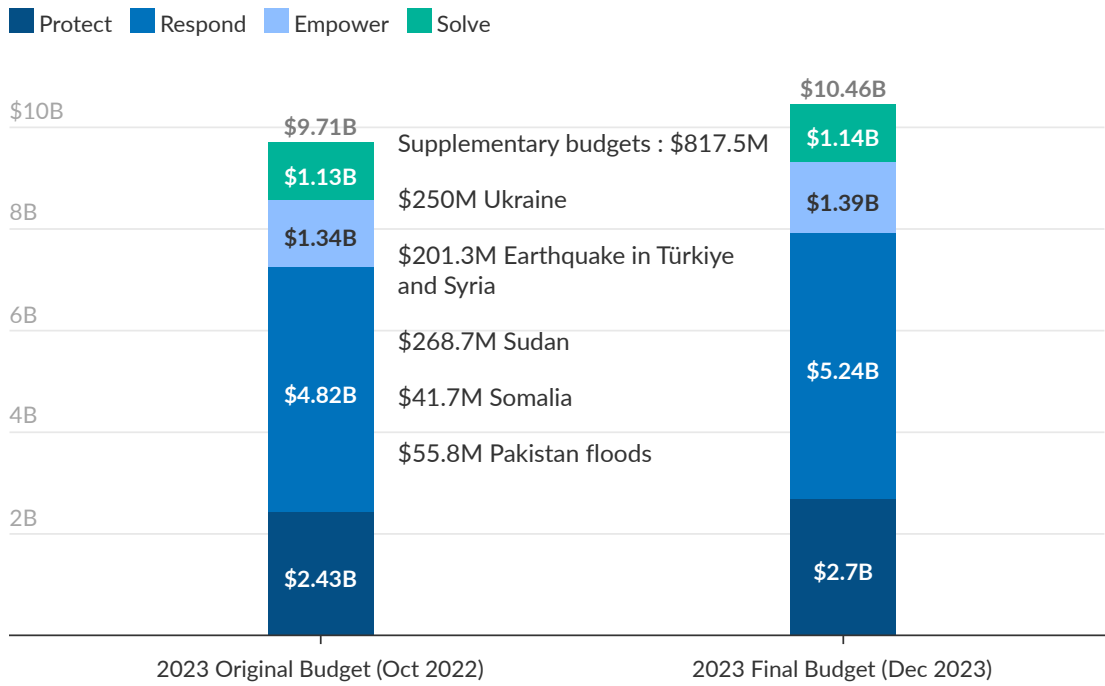
Father of six Khalid holds his daughter Wajid, 5, while his eldest son Wisam, 12, holds two-month-old baby Ali outside a shelter in Azraq camp in Jordan. Refugees from Syria, Khalid and his wife Abeer have lived in the camp since 2016 and have six young children who they share the small shelter with, and who they struggle to provide warm clothing for. The family's shelter recently caught fire while they were out, destroying all their belongings during the cold winter. They now have a new shelter and are being supported by UNHCR with new relief items.
© UNHCR/Claire Thomas

In 2023, financial requirements for programmed activities amounted to \$10.463 billion, which was \$188 million or almost 2% higher than the \$10.275 billion required in 2022.

Programmed activities are: country and regional programmes; global programmes, which are technical

activities undertaken by Headquarters but which are of direct benefit to field operations; and the work of Headquarters to provide leadership, management, policy guidance, administrative support, and managerial and programmatic assistance.

Original and final budget for programmed activities | 2023



By Impact Area

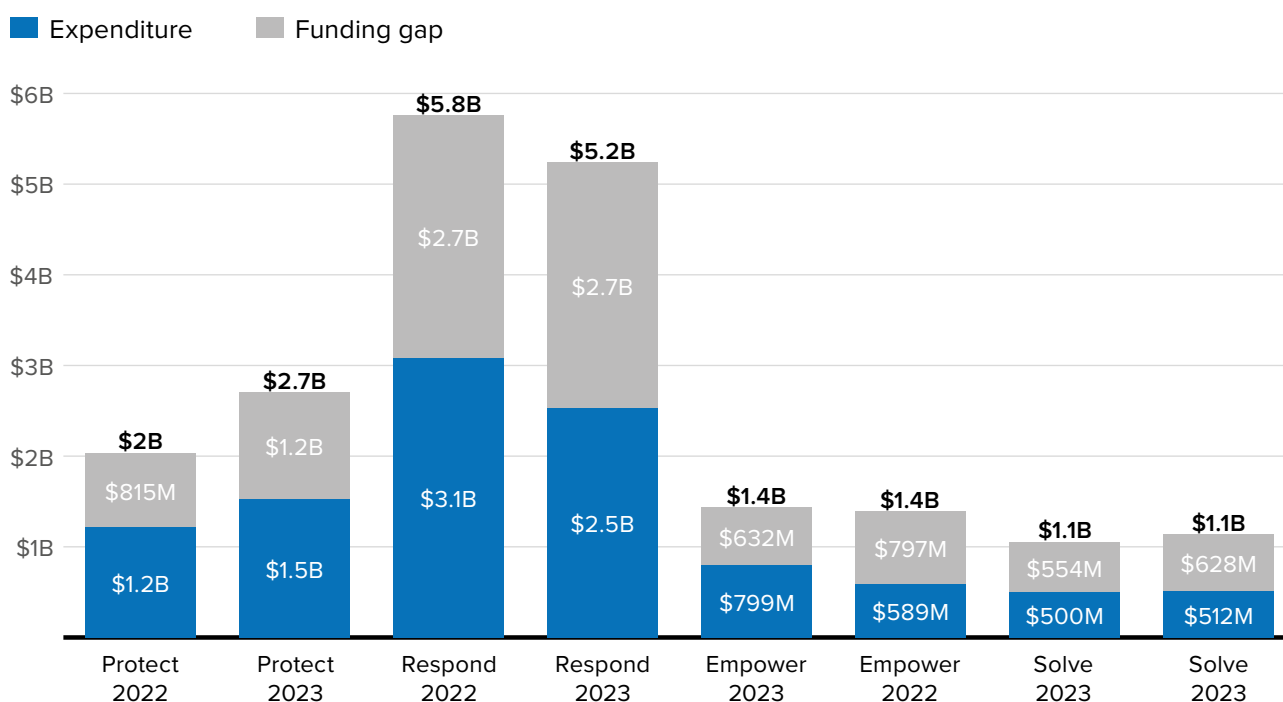
Globally, the budget for **Impact Area 2** (Realizing basic rights in safe environments, or "Respond") was the largest at \$5.236 billion, representing 50% of programmed activities. The largest requirements for this Impact Area were for operations in Ukraine, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan.

The budget for **Impact Area 1** (Attaining favourable protection environments, or "Protect") was the second largest at \$2.702 billion or 25.8 % of programmed activities. The largest budgets for this Impact Area were for Sudan, Ethiopia, Türkiye and the Republic of Moldova.

Impact Area 3 (Empowering communities and achieving gender equality, or "Empower") had the third largest budget at \$1.385 billion or 13.2 % of programmed activities. The largest budgets were for Pakistan, South Sudan, Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic.

The budget for **Impact Area 4** (Securing solutions, or "Solve") was the smallest at \$1.140 billion or 10.9% of programmed activities. The largest budgets were for Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Mexico.

Budget, expenditure and funding gap by Impact Area | 2022 - 2023



Amount above each bar is the total budget for each Impact Area.

By Region

The largest needs were in the **Middle East and North Africa** at \$2.442 billion, or 23.3 % of the total requirements for

programmed activities, and **East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes** at \$2.161 billion or 20.7 % of the total.

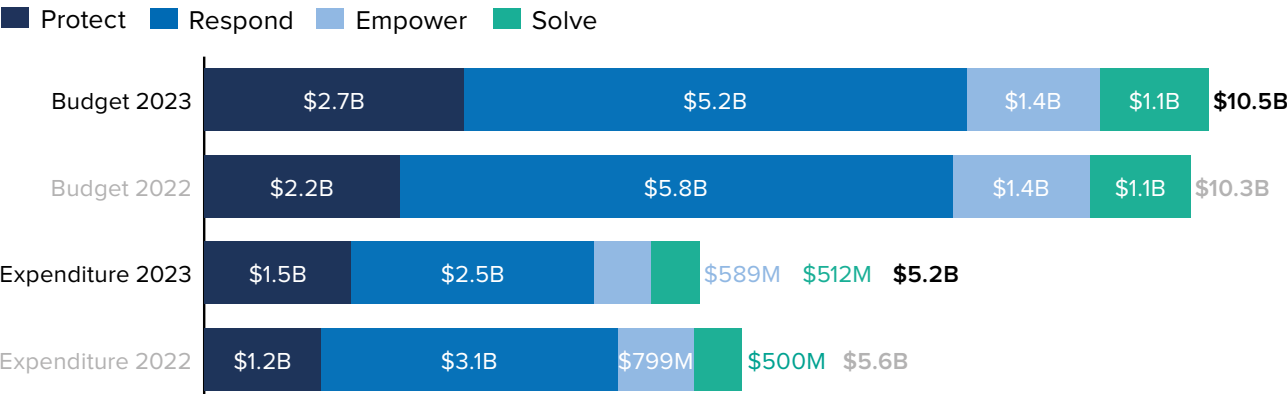


Expenditure

18-year-old Nfutishe and her young child were among more than 135,000 people forced to flee violence in Sake in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's North Kivu province. They arrived safely at the Mugunga displacement site near Goma, where UNHCR provided her with a tarpaulin to protect her young child. © UNHCR/Blaise Sanyila

Expenditure by Impact Area

Budget and expenditure by Impact Areas | 2022 - 2023



Programmed activities - Excludes JPOs and Operational reserve

Under [Impact Area 1](#), expenditure of \$1.530 billion accounted for 29.6% of UNHCR's total expenditure. This was an increase of \$313.6 million or 25.8% when compared to \$1.216 billion in 2022. UNHCR continued to advocate for the rights of forcibly displaced and stateless people and for a strengthened protection response. For example, UNHCR strengthened its registration and documentation capacity, with 28.2 million people individually registered in the Population Registration and Identity Management EcoSystem (PRIMES).

Under [Impact Area 2](#), expenditure of \$2.529 billion accounted for 49.0% of the total, a decrease of \$555.5 million or 18% when compared to \$3.084 billion in 2022. With armed conflict and insecurity continuing to drive new displacement and hindering solutions for those in protracted displacement situations, UNHCR stepped up its response in 43 new emergencies in 29 countries, providing life-saving assistance

and supporting governments.

Under [Impact Area 3](#), expenditure of \$588.5 million accounted for 11.4% of total expenditure. This represents a decrease of \$210.3 million or 26.3% when compared to \$798.8 million in 2022. UNHCR advocated the integration of refugees into national frameworks and championed refugees' access to vital services such as health care, education, and employment opportunities.

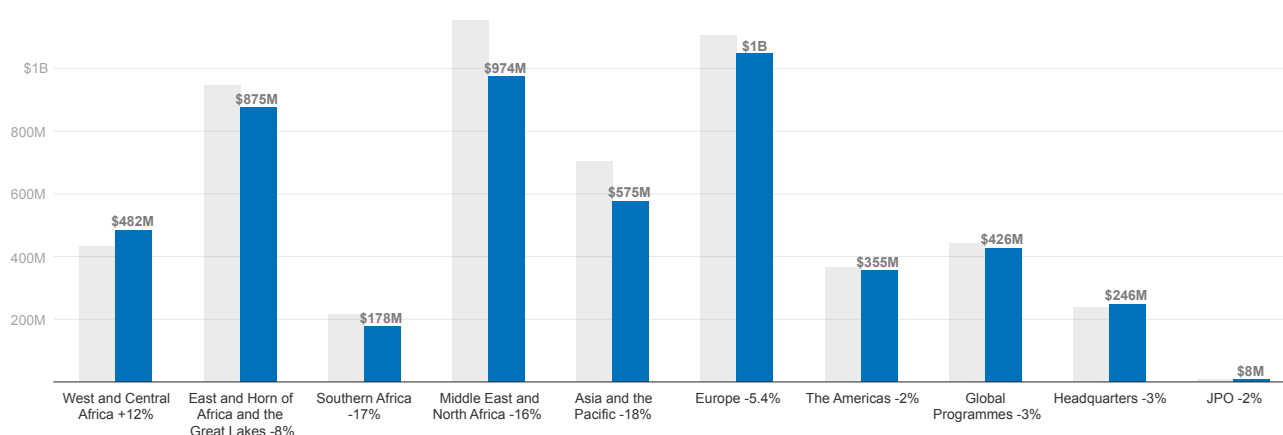
Under [Impact Area 4](#), expenditure of \$511.7 million accounted for 9.9% of total expenditure, an increase of \$11.8 million or 2.4% when compared to \$499.8 million in 2022. UNHCR worked towards durable solutions, including for example on an engagement strategy with development actors so as to partner more effectively with international financial institutions and others.

Expenditure by region

2023 vs 2022 expenditure

Global expenditure decreased by 8% (\$440.5M) in 2023 compared to 2022.

■ 2022 Final expenditure ■ 2023 Final expenditure



In [West and Central Africa](#), 2023 expenditure was \$482.2 million, an increase of \$49.9 million or 11.5% when compared to 2022. This budget increase primarily stems from the [crisis in Sudan](#), the scale of which called for additional resources across the region and particularly in Chad and Niger. In addition to the situation in Sudan, the region continued to grapple with protracted crises such as drought and conflict in the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, and in the Central African Republic.

In the [East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes](#), expenditure was \$875.3 million, a decrease of \$72.1 million or 7.6% when compared to 2022. Across the region, the situation remained challenging, with an increased number of IDPs due to conflict in [Sudan](#), long devastating droughts, and growing numbers of refugees.

Expenditure in [Southern Africa](#) amounted to \$178.2 million, a decrease of 16.7% or \$35.7 million compared to expenditure of \$213.9 million in 2022. The complex crises in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) and Mozambique were the main drivers of forced displacement in the region. At the same time, protracted refugee situations persisted in other countries in the region.

Expenditure in the [Middle East and North Africa](#) amounted to \$974.2 million, a decrease of \$179.4 million or 15.6% when compared to \$1.154 billion in 2022. The region was confronted with multiple emergencies such as the earthquake in the Syrian Arab Republic, massive flooding in Libya, displacement

in Egypt from the conflict in [Sudan](#), and displacement in Mauritania due to increased insecurity in Mali.

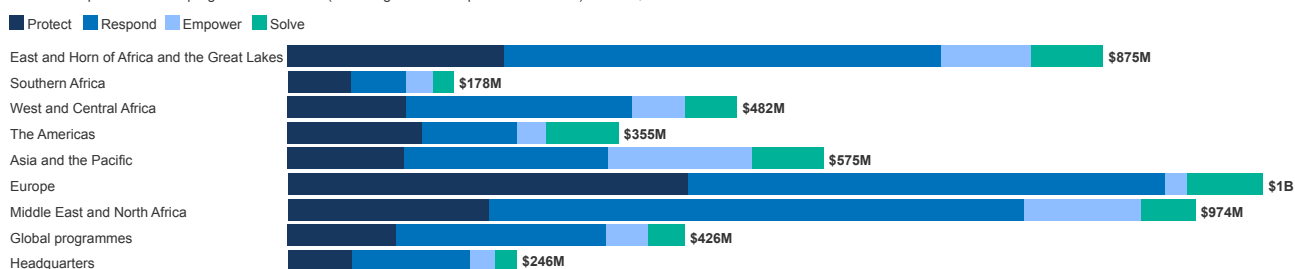
In [Asia and the Pacific](#), expenditure amounted to \$575.1 million, a decrease of \$127 million or 18.1% compared to expenditure of \$702.1 million in 2022. Climate change complicated displacement across the region, with UNHCR helping build the climate resilience of displaced people by, for example, advocating their inclusion in national disaster risk reduction plans.

Expenditure for [Europe](#) amounted to \$1.047 billion, a decrease of \$60.1 million or 5.4% compared to expenditure of \$1.107 billion in 2022. The [Ukraine situation](#) remained the largest emergency in the region. Access to decent work, affordable housing and social protection remained key concerns for forcibly displaced in Europe. UNHCR helped address social protection barriers through advocacy, outreach, information, enrolment assistance and legal advice, particularly for the most vulnerable groups.

Expenditure in [the Americas](#) amounted to \$355.1 million, a decrease of \$8.6 million or 2.4% compared to \$363.7 million in 2022. There was a notable increase in the number of people on the move in Central and North America. To address these challenges of displacement and mixed movements, UNHCR employed a comprehensive route-based approach to strengthen protection and solutions from countries of origin through transit to final destination.

Expenditure by region and Impact Area | 2023

UNHCR's expenditure for its programmed activities (excluding JPOs and operational reserve) totalled \$5.159 billion in 2023.



Country Operational Technical Support (**COTS**) was introduced in the 2024 programme budget as a separate line under country and regional programmes. COTS relates to activities managed at Headquarters and directly benefiting country operations. If the same was applied for 2023, expenditure under COTS would amount to approximately \$118 million.

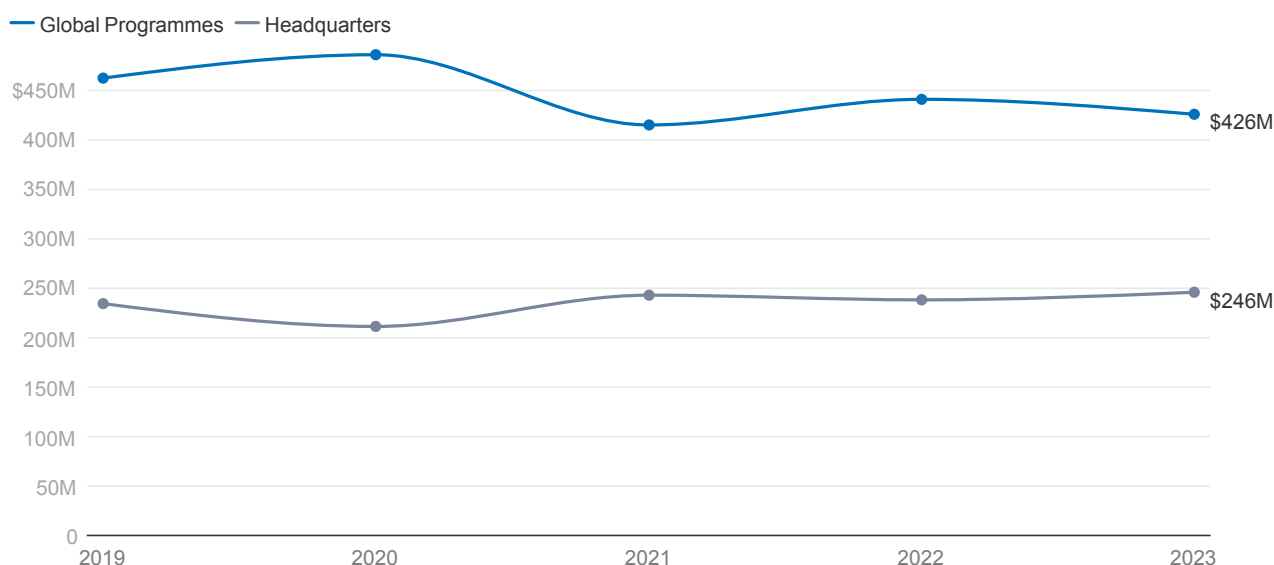
Global programmes

The expenditure was \$426 million, a decrease of \$15.1 million or 3.4% compared to \$441.1 million in 2022, mainly due to significant investments in the global supply management platforms in support of the Ukraine situation that were completed in 2022. In 2023, significant investments included the [2023 Global Refugee Forum](#), which aimed at mobilizing new pledges and initiatives.

Headquarters

The expenditure increased slightly by \$7.7 million to \$246 million or 3.2% compared to \$238.3 million in 2022 due to investments in systems development and maintenance across HQ divisions.

Expenditure for Global programmes and Headquarters | 2019 - 2023



Amounts do not include expenditure for JPOs.

Operational reserve

A total of \$31.9 million was transferred from the operational reserve: \$17.5 million in support of emergency preparedness and response for the situation in [Burkina Faso](#) and \$14.4 million for the response to the [Afghanistan](#) earthquake.

For the situation in Burkina Faso, additional resources were required to address the influx of displaced people from Burkina Faso and neighbouring countries, namely Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and the Senegal representation office. In Afghanistan, additional resources were required to meet the critical needs of 25% of people in need (56,000 refugee and IDP returnees) in Herat Province, helping cover shelter, WASH, cash assistance and protection activities.

Expenditure by source of funding

2023 Expenditure by source of funding | USD thousands

SOURCE OF FUNDING										
	~~Carry-over from prior years~~		~~~Voluntary Cash Contributions~~~			Voluntary in-kind Contributions	Indirect support costs	United Nations Regular Budget	Other income	TOTAL
	Earmarked	Unearmarked	Earmarked	Softly earmarked	Unearmarked					
FIELD OPERATIONS										
East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes	21,016	-	549,731	114,959	114,066	54,470	6,256	-	14,797	875,295
Southern Africa	1,576	-	85,677	55,520	25,723	2,024	5,440	-	2,278	178,238
West and Central Africa	14,006	-	271,844	87,016	83,922	12,544	7,319	-	5,584	482,235
Americas	5,929	-	275,326	19,707	44,162	1,232	6,485	-	2,295	355,135
Asia and the Pacific	27,036	-	327,204	139,989	49,367	2,595	5,521	-	23,395	575,107
Europe	235,452	-	483,909	259,900	23,080	16,858	994	-	26,550	1,046,743
Middle East and North Africa	60,121	-	616,369	163,382	108,936	9,320	8,044	-	8,051	974,224
TOTAL COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMES	365,135	-	2,610,061	840,473	449,255	99,042	40,059	-	82,951	4,486,976
Global Programmes	7,209	48,459	46,381	42,196	256,485	16,186	859	-	8,236	426,011
Headquarters	129	-	2,480	-	-	12,064	184,477	44,634	2,216	246,001
Operational Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Junior Professional Officers Fund	5,175	-	2,391	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,567
TOTAL	377,648	48,459	2,661,314	882,669	705,740	127,292	225,395	44,634	93,403	5,166,555
% of total expenditure	7%	1%	52%	17%	14%	2%	4%	1%	2%	100%

¹ "Softly earmarked" includes contributions earmarked at the regional, subregional, situation or thematic level.

² "Other income" includes miscellaneous income, prior year adjustments, cancellations and other internal transfers.

This table displays how UNHCR used its various sources of income to cover its \$5.167 billion expenditure. Unearmarked income was allocated throughout the year in line with identified priorities and needs, and according to the overall objectives of kickstarting emergency operations; bolstering underfunded operations; and enabling programmes to be implemented fully. No unearmarked funding was used for Headquarters.

Voluntary contributions represented the largest source of funding. Earmarked voluntary contributions funded 51%

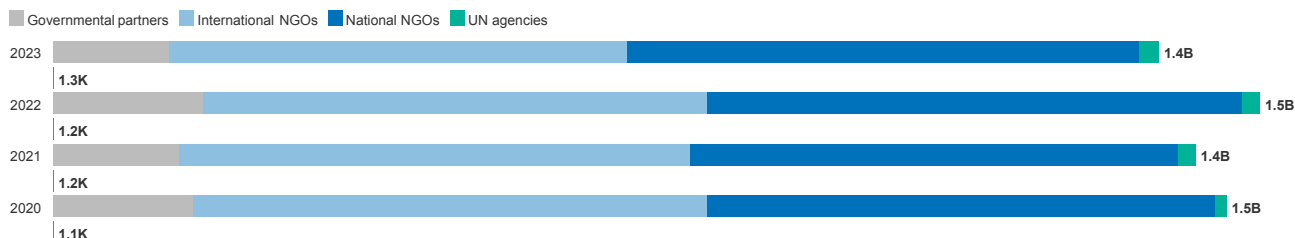
of UNHCR operations, softly earmarked funded 17%, and unearmarked voluntary contributions funded 14%. The largest expenditures funded from earmarked voluntary contributions were in the Middle East and North Africa (23.2%), followed by the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (20.7%), and Europe (18%).

UNHCR funded \$225.4 million or 4% of expenditure from indirect support costs, \$184.5 million at Headquarters, \$0.9 million under global programmes and \$40.1 million in the regions.

Expenditure via partners

Global expenditure via partners | 2020 - 2023 (USD millions)

\$1.371 billion spent via 1,266 partners in 2023.



Figures appearing below each bar are the total number of partners or for each category when scrolling on.

Of UNHCR's total expenditure, **\$1.371 billion was implemented through 1,266 funded partners working in 108 operations**. Funded partners included 845 national NGOs and 231 government partners. Local and national responders made up 85% of all funded partners, following similar trends as in past years. UNHCR disbursed approximately \$778.7 million to local and national responders, which represented 57% of UNHCR's total partnership funding and 24.4% of overall programme expenditure. Similar to the previous year, UNHCR directly implemented large-scale cash and in-kind assistance programmes in some countries in the Ukraine situation, primarily in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, which resulted in a lower share of partnership funding overall. However, in comparison to the first year of the emergency in 2022, there was a higher proportion of local and national partners supporting the response. Discounting the Ukraine situation, 26% of UNHCR's overall programme budget was spent via local and national responders.

UNHCR continued to **invest significantly in localization**, including by scaling up its grant agreement mechanism that provides a simple and efficient tool for organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people to receive funding directly from UNHCR. A survey carried out with 46 organizations which benefited from these grants previously reported high levels of satisfaction and underscored the grants were useful to ensure community-based engagement and start building the internal capacity of these organizations. This positive feedback enabled UNHCR to raise the budget ceiling for the grants to \$12,000 per agreement in late 2023. 107 grant agreements with 93 organizations were signed in 26 countries in 2023, bringing the total of grant agreements to nearly 200 since their launch in 2021.

Coordination in refugee situations

UNHCR's planning and budgeting starts at the field level. Planning identifies the needs of forcibly displaced and stateless people. These needs form the basis for operations to produce budgets for the planning year. These budgets are aggregated at global level and then carefully reviewed and approved by ExCom as UNHCR's global needs-driven budget. This programme budget becomes the basis for the annual Global Appeal. This is the budget for which UNHCR fundraises, and to which donors provide voluntary contributions. Those contributions, together with detailed reporting on what UNHCR was able to do with donors' support, are reflected in the annual Global Report.

During the year, should **operations be faced with emergencies bringing new or unforeseen needs** during the planning phase of a significant nature, which cannot be covered within the approved budget, UNHCR may endorse a **supplementary budget**. The new financial needs come in addition to the operation's initially approved budget. This supplementary budget is issued externally as an advocacy, communications and **fundraising tool in the form of a supplementary appeal**.

In some cases, a UNHCR operation's financial needs and activities are included in whole or in part in various inter-agency coordination response mechanisms plans. Most particularly, these include RRP – regional or country refugee response plans – and HRP – humanitarian response plans. The former are coordinated and led by UNHCR for refugee emergency situations (from the onset of an emergency to more protracted situations) and are expressions to operationalize UNHCR's responsibilities under its refugee coordination mandate and in line with the [Refugee Coordination Model \(RCM\)](#). The latter is coordinated by OCHA for humanitarian response within countries, mainly for people in need of humanitarian assistance (including IDPs) emergencies.

Where relevant, an HRP may also include a separate but integrated inter-agency refugee chapter that outlines the specifics of any refugee response within the country.

Activities included in RRP or HRP are not additional to those included in UNHCR's budget, nor are they duplicative. They are simply expressed within a different framework to the operational plan to show complementarity among all inter-agency partners working in a country or regional response framework. By definition, and because of the nature of refugee movements which are cross-border, a Regional RRP will include several countries within it, whereas a country RRP and an HRP are specific to the country within which it is based. An RRP provides donors with a transparent and coherent picture of the needs of refugees, host communities and other needs, and represents a vetted single strategic response plan coordinated with host governments. To track progress, improve transparency and flag funding gaps, the Refugee Funding Tracker compiles all financial data related to refugee programmes and regional response plans. A similar environment exists for HRPs, with financial tracking provided by OCHA's Financial Tracking Service.

For RRP and HRP, donors do not fund the response plans directly: instead, they fund agencies in the plans for particular activities. Hence the importance of RRP and HRP as coordination, and advocacy and fundraising instruments. Those agencies, in turn, are responsible for reporting their funding to UNHCR for inclusion in the Refugee Funding Tracker, or to OCHA for inclusion in the Financial Tracking Service. The more agencies report, and the better the quality of their reporting, the better the information in both tracking systems, with benefits such as better analysis of funding flows. Donors can be and are important advocates for reporting: a donor can itself report its funding, and can also encourage the recipients of their funding to report as well.

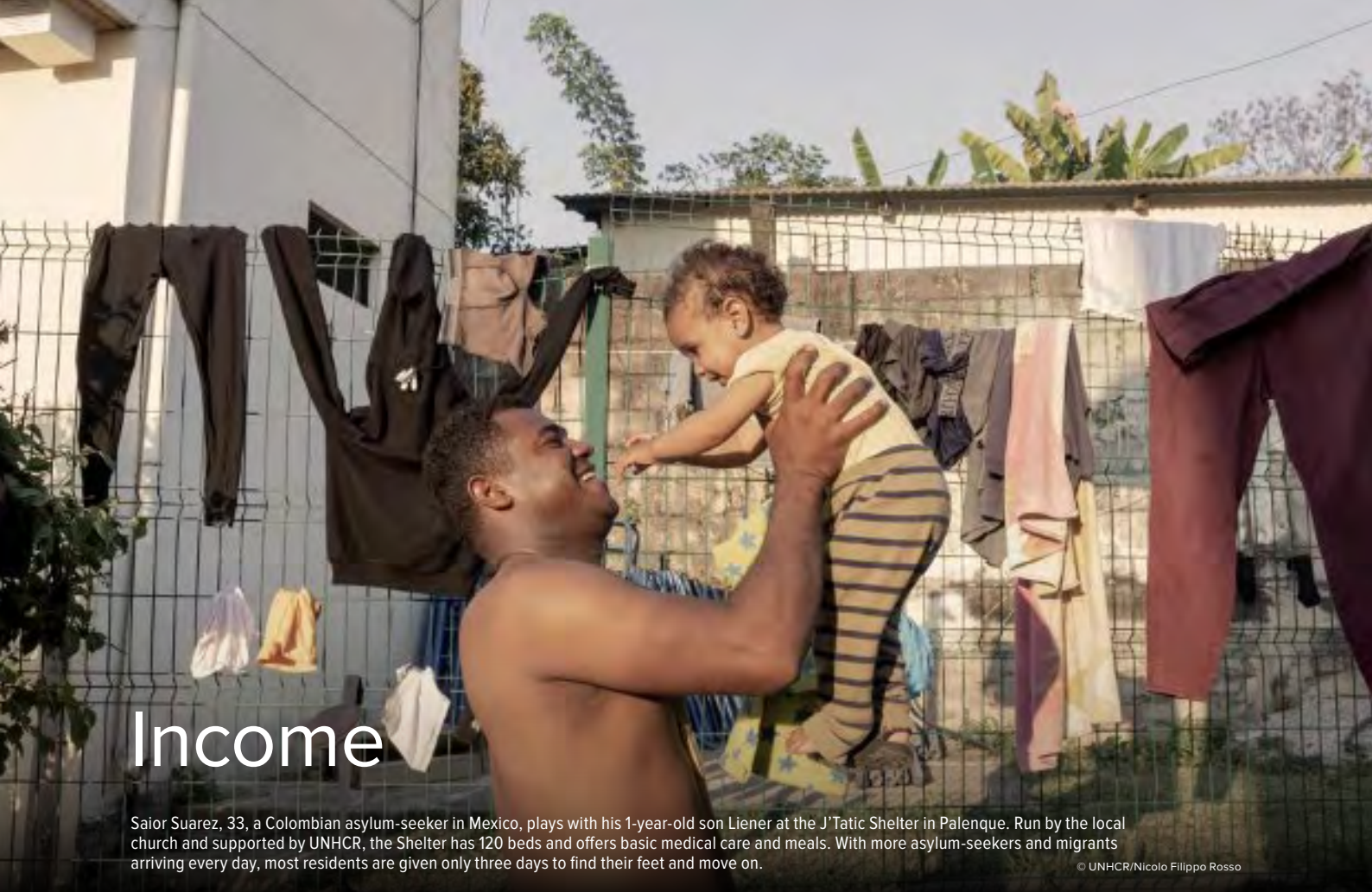
Inter-agency response plans | 2023 (USD)

Plan	Situation	Funds requested	Funds received	Funding gap	Funding level
Regional Refugee Response Plans	Afghanistan	613,012,986	200,605,989	412,406,997	33%
	DRC	605,048,527	196,335,626	408,712,901	32%
	South Sudan	1,333,140,971	278,980,553	1,054,160,418	21%
	Sudan	1,004,761,772	385,667,399	619,094,373	38%
	Ukraine	1,685,495,256	730,195,519	955,299,737	43%
Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan	Syria	5,856,939,097	1,807,522,542	4,049,416,555	31%
Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan	Venezuela	1,715,042,189	402,672,862	1,312,369,327	23%
Rohingya Joint Response Plan	Myanmar	875,927,365	573,475,904	302,451,461	65%
Grand Total		13,689,368,163	4,575,456,394	9,113,911,769	33%

See [here](#) for more on UNHCR's strategic partnerships in 2023



UNHCR and other UN staff take part in an inter-agency visit to a site for internally displaced people who had fled from violent clashes, including heavy artillery bombardment, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in February 2023. More than 117,000 people, mainly women and children, fled into Masisi Territory in the space of a week. © UNHCR/Blaise Sanyila



Income

Saïor Suarez, 33, a Colombian asylum-seeker in Mexico, plays with his 1-year-old son Liener at the J'Tatic Shelter in Palenque. Run by the local church and supported by UNHCR, the Shelter has 120 beds and offers basic medical care and meals. With more asylum-seekers and migrants arriving every day, most residents are given only three days to find their feet and move on.

© UNHCR/Nicolo Filippo Rosso

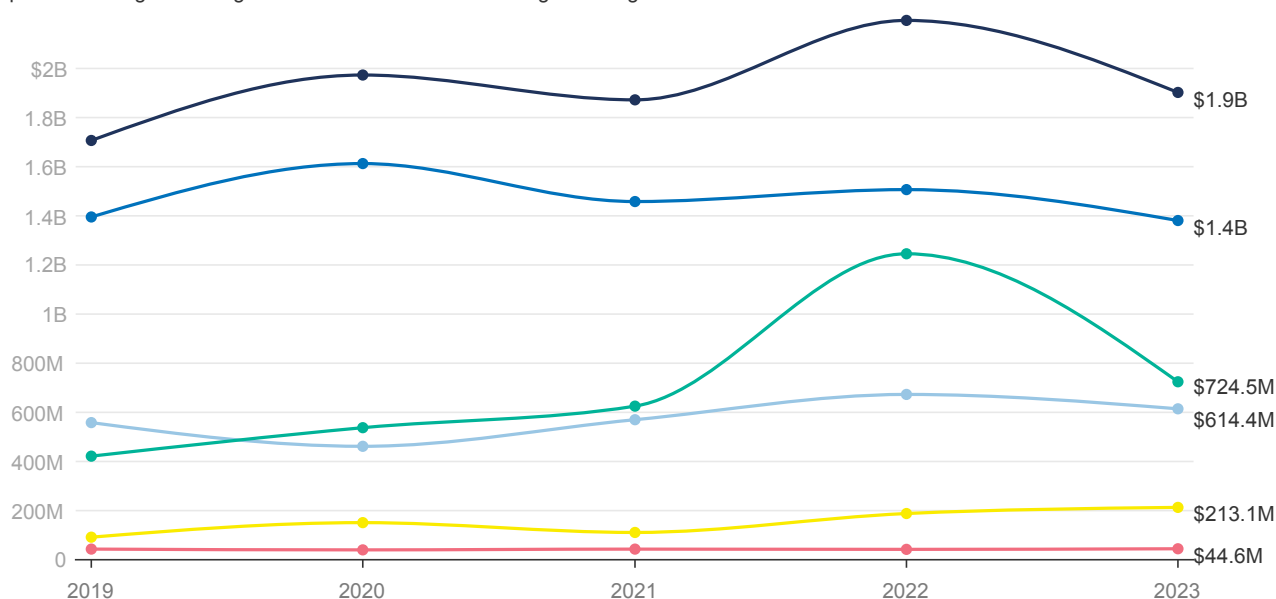
In 2023, **UNHCR faced significant funding challenges**, stemming primarily from a decline in the quantity, quality and timeliness of voluntary contributions from several donors. These declines were serious obstacles to UNHCR's ability to respond to the escalating global crisis of forced displacement, whereas timely, sufficient and quality funding allows UNHCR to swiftly address emerging needs and assist displaced

populations. The decrease in voluntary contributions – particularly in flexible funding – meant UNHCR faced heightened difficulties in meeting the many and pressing needs of forcibly displaced persons worldwide, left gaps in its assistance, and meant it had to take drastic measures to realign and reorganize its staffing and operational footprint.

Sources of income | 2019 - 2023

Total income from governments and EU : \$3.6B (2019), \$4B (2020), \$3.9B (2021), \$4.4B (2022) and \$3.9B (2023)

— United States of America — European Union and EU Member States — Other governmental donors — Private donors — UN pooled funding and intergovernmental donors — UN Regular Budget



Quantity

Contributions and funds available in 2023 | USD millions

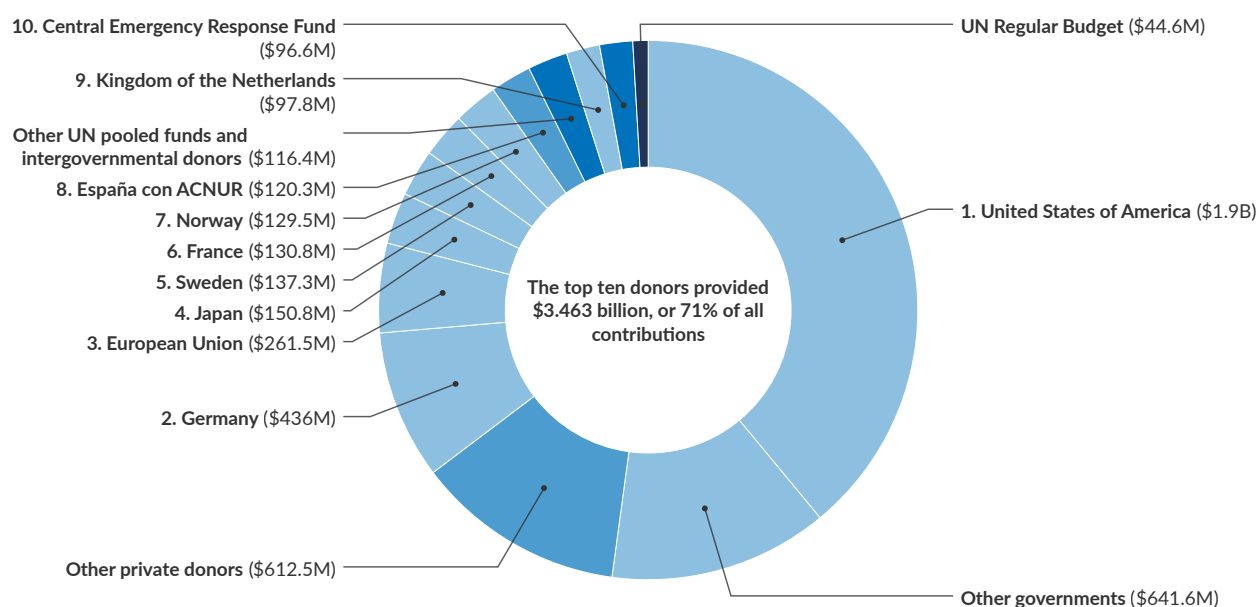
Type of funds	Contributions received in 2023	Funds from past year and others	Total Funds available in 2023
Voluntary contributions received in 2023 for implementation in 2023	4,576		4,576
Contributions for implementation in future years	259		
UN regular budget	45		45
Contributions from past years		196	196
Carry-over from past years		573	573
Other funds available and adjustments		326	326
Total	4,880	1,095	5,716

UNHCR raised \$4.880 billion in contributions in 2023, including funds for activities beyond 2023 and the \$44.6 million assessed contribution of the UN Regular Budget.

Available resources totalled \$5.716 billion when carry-over, multiyear contributions from past years, and other funds available and adjustments are considered. This was a decrease from the \$6.180 billion available in 2022. The funds available to UNHCR covered 52% of global budget requirements, compared to 58% in 2022.

Voluntary contributions amounted to \$4.835 billion, almost a billion dollars less than the \$5.809 billion received in 2022. UNHCR is grateful for the voluntary contributions it received from its donors – both traditional and newer donors – many of whom were also managing increased fiscal pressures. In some cases, these resulted in reduced levels of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) for multilateral organizations such as UNHCR. Currency devaluations were another determining factor.

Contributions from the top ten donors | 2023



The income from España con ACNUR includes \$8.3 million in contributions from autonomous authorities in Spain.

UNHCR is grateful for the significant increases in voluntary contributions in 2023 compared with 2022 from among others, the [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#) (+365%), the State of Kuwait (+210%), UN Joint Programmes (+188%), Education Cannot Wait (+46%), [Finland](#) (+39%), the Central Emergency Response Fund (+37%), [France](#) (+32%), [Austria](#) (+32%), [Ireland](#) (+21%), and [Norway](#) (+10%).

The more significant reductions in 2023 compared with 2022 included [Qatar](#) (-97%), the private sector (-66%), [Italy](#) (-50%), the [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#) (-43%), [Canada](#) (-22%), [Germany](#) (-19%), the [United States of America](#) (-13%), and [Japan](#) (-10%). These reductions notwithstanding, the **United States of America and Germany remained UNHCR's top two donors.**



Tens of thousands of Afghans returned to Afghanistan following the announcement of a decree by the Government of Pakistan to deport undocumented foreigners. UNHCR and partners, as part of an inter-agency response led by IOM, scaled up operations to help those arriving, identifying the most vulnerable and those with specific needs for help.

© UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production

Underfunding

UNHCR highlighted the **impact of underfunding** on forcibly displaced and stateless people by publishing two reports, in June and September 2023. The reports focused on 13 large operations which had 36% of the world's forcibly displaced and stateless people.

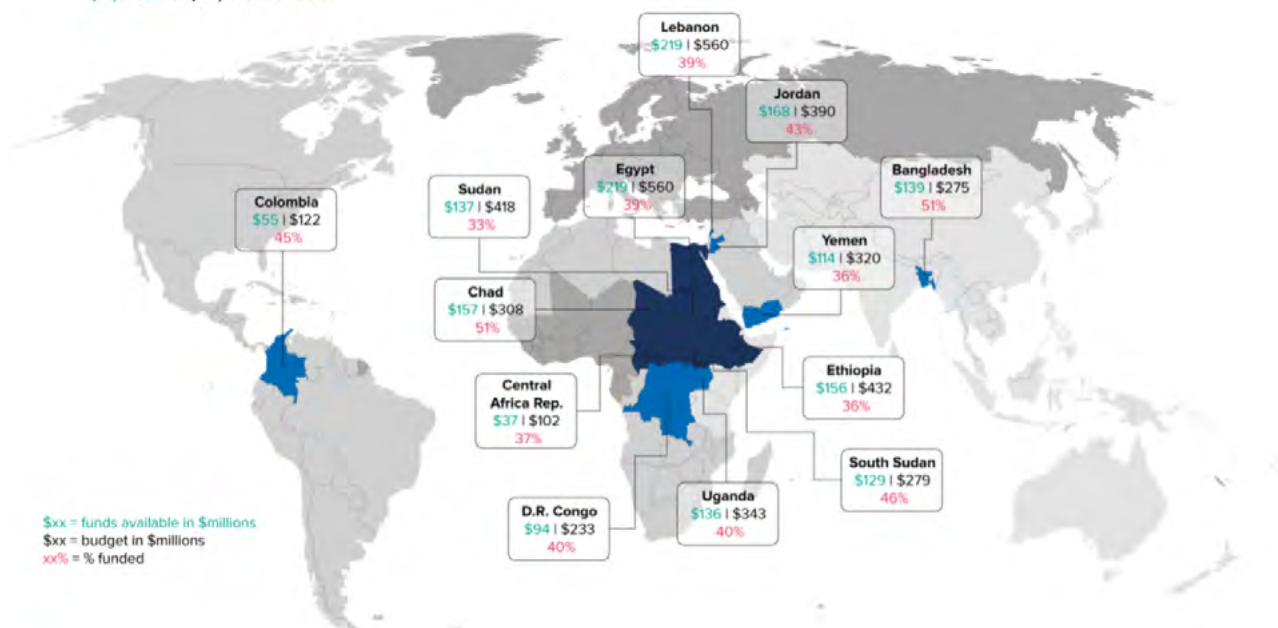
For most operations, from the time the alert was first sounded until year-end, the **funding levels increased** by no more

than 14%, with the exception of Chad (30%), Central African Republic and Egypt (both by 19%). It is also worth noting that the May funding levels for South Sudan, Sudan, and Chad were based on a lower budgetary requirement, which were then amended in August through a Supplementary Budget. This data indicates that overall, fundraising efforts had the most impact on countries that were part of the Sudan emergency.

[Read more on the 2023 underfunded reports](#)

Support to underfunded operations | 2023

\$1,598 | \$3,934 | 41%



The specific fundraising focus on these **13 operations** complemented overall fundraising efforts for the whole organization, which was done through a sustained outreach with both the public sector and the private sector at all levels. Unfortunately, the funds available to UNHCR at the start of the fourth quarter were only equivalent to 44% of its total budget of \$10.929 billion (compared to 50% at the same time in 2022). At that time, UNHCR signalled that at an absolute minimum, it would still need to raise another \$650 million before the end of 2023 to avoid devastating cuts.

One month into the fourth quarter, UNHCR had still not received firm assurances from donors that it would receive more funding before the end of the year. In this context, the organization had to undertake a range of cost-saving measures. For example, non-essential activities – such as with regards to travel, workshops, and other events, as well as procurement and

partner agreements – were deferred to 2024.

To the extent possible, efforts were made to minimize the **impact of these cost-saving measures** on forcibly displaced and stateless people. Inevitably, operations were required to prioritize more robustly, and simply had to do less with less.

As a result of this robust prioritization and deferrals, as well as funding that arrived during the last weeks of the year, UNHCR was able to cover all the commitments it had made during the year. However, while the amount of voluntary contributions received in 2023 was higher than that of 2021 (\$4.637 billion), this increase was insufficient to meet the additional needs resulting from the steep rise in the number of forcibly displaced and stateless people. This resulted in a drop in per capita funding – defined as income over the total population of people in need – from \$57 to \$47 during this same period.



Forced displacement has expanded hugely since 2010 and funding for UNHCR has not kept up. Since 2013, when funding averaged \$72 for every forcibly displaced or stateless person, the numbers of people in need have grown at a faster rate than the increase in funding. In 2023, per capita funding for UNHCR reached a new low of \$47, 19% below the 10-year average.

Quality

The quality of funds relates to **how much income is flexible** (unearmarked and softly earmarked) and multi-year in accordance with the Grand Bargain's definitions¹. With the size, scale, and costs of humanitarian crises growing, quality

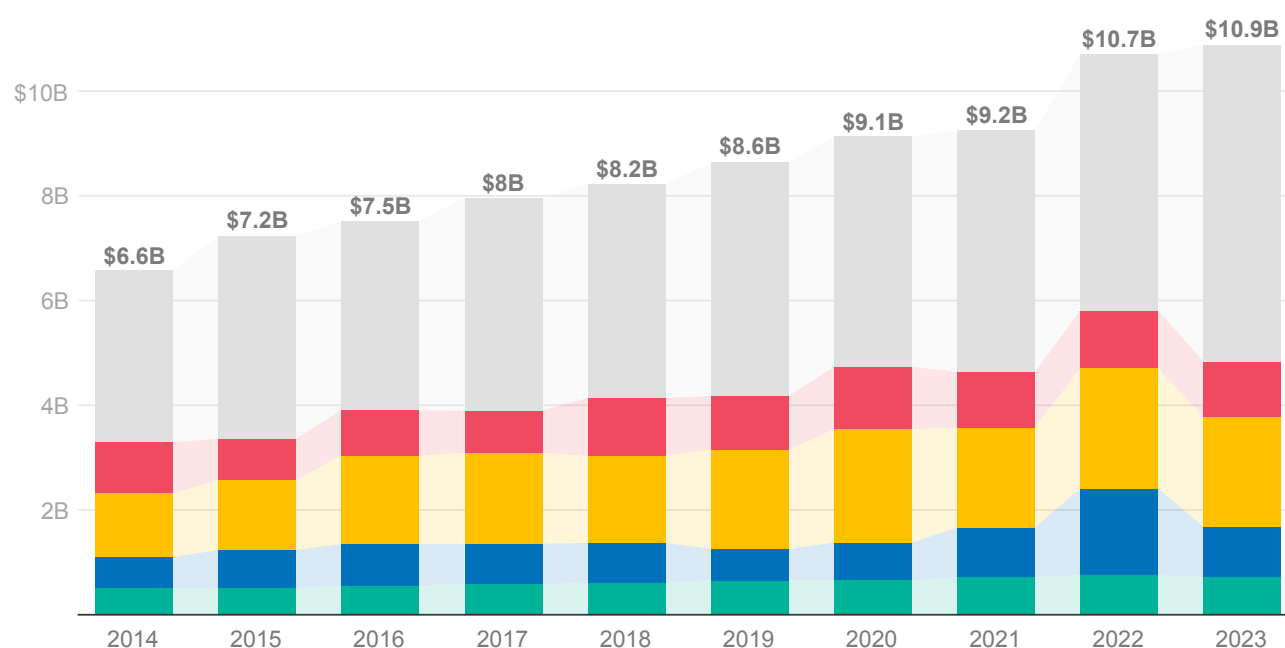
humanitarian funding for refugee responses is invaluable.

[1. Multi-year and flexible funding - Definitions Guidance Summary](#)

Voluntary contributions vs budget | 2014 - 2023

Figures above each bar is the budget amount.

Unearmarked Softly Earmarked Earmarked Tightly earmarked Funding gap



* UN Regular Budget excluded. Acknowledgement Year Basis.

Flexible funding includes funding that is unearmarked and can be spent without restrictions, or softly earmarked, for example to a theme, a situation, or a region.

Flexible funding is allocated to where it is most needed. Once more earmarked funding is received for an operation, the flexible funding that it is using is “released” to resource operations which continue to have major needs but have received less attention. For example, by the end of the first quarter of 2023, the following ten operations were the main recipients of flexible funding allocations: Ukraine, Lebanon, Jordan, Republic of Türkiye, Moldova, Iraq, Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Uganda. By year-end, **the top 10 operations to which flexible funds were allocated** were Uganda, Chad, Iraq, Jordan, Ethiopia, Yemen, Kenya, Sudan, Niger and Nigeria.

Flexible funding includes unearmarked funding. Governments gave \$440 million in unearmarked funding, or 61% of the total, while the other \$278 million (39%) came from the private sector, including \$172 million from UNHCR's National Partners.

There was a **reduction in unearmarked funds in absolute terms**: \$764 million in 2022 and \$718 million in 2023 (a 6% decrease). This meant that in addition to operations receiving less funding specifically directed to their countries, they had to rely on a smaller pool of unearmarked funds, while often having to respond to increased needs.

At year-end, **the top 10 operations to which unearmarked funds were allocated** were Iraq, South Sudan, Yemen, Chad, Kenya, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Jordan, Central African Republic, and Mauritania. Of these ten, South Sudan, Yemen, Chad, Ethiopia, Jordan, and the Central African Republic had been flagged as underfunded in the two underfunded reports. Against this specific advocacy, these six operations continued to need unearmarked funding in order to deliver on the most urgent priorities for the year.

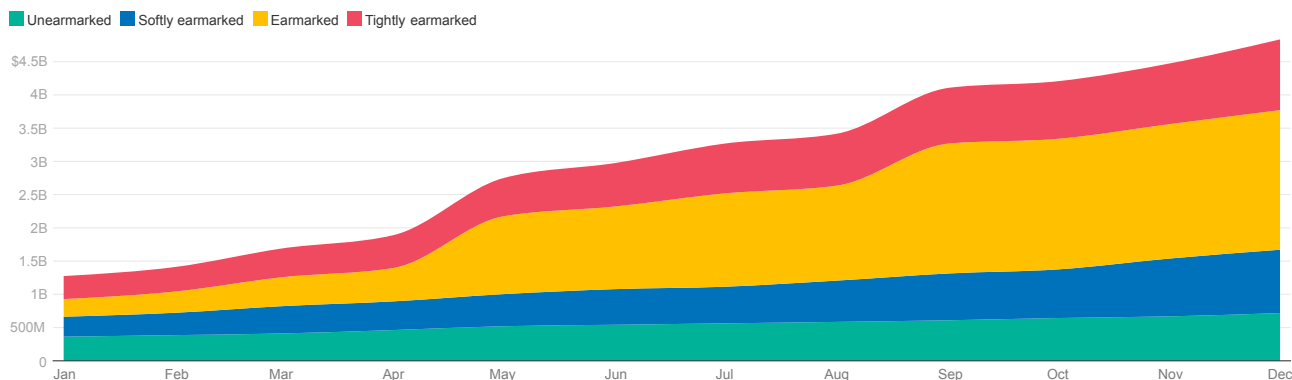
At the 2023 Global Refugee Forum (GRF), the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland led the formulation of a multi-stakeholder pledge on [Quality Humanitarian Funding for Refugee Situations, which now has 10 participating Member States](#). In line with Grand Bargain commitments, this pledge commends the generous ongoing contributions from current donors of quality funds and encourages their continued, long-term commitment to providing UNHCR with at least 30% of their annual humanitarian support in unearmarked funds, or 50% flexible funds. Where existing agreements do not meet this target, current and new donors are encouraged to mobilize additional resources to close the gap by the next GRF in 2027. UNHCR is engaged to support donors in fulfilling these commitments as well as expanding the list of pledges.

Timeliness

The magnitude of displacement in 2023 pushed the boundaries of UNHCR's capacity to respond. However, **timely support from donors allowed the organization to continue strengthening preparedness and response capacity** in the face of growing needs, and flexible funding was essential in helping us respond where needs were greatest. In addition to critical support from government donors contributing

unearmarked funding, UNHCR was able to quickly launch emergency responses thanks to over \$78 million in global emergency reserve funding from the United States, Sweden and Denmark. Private sector donors also contributed more than \$22 million in funding softly earmarked for use in situations and emergencies worldwide, as well as valuable unearmarked funding.

Timing of pledges in 2023



By the end of the first quarter of 2023, UNHCR had received 35% of the funds it would receive for the whole year, compared with 32% in 2022. On the one hand, this showed that some donors were delivering on pledges made at the [UNHCR Pledging Conference for 2023](#) in a timely manner. On

the other hand, the percentage data for 2022 was also very much affected by the fact that the total income received by year-end was substantively higher because of the generous response to the Ukraine emergency throughout the year.

Predictability



Multi-year funding – funding pledged for 24 months or more – facilitates UNHCR's efforts to allocate resources to its operations around the world at the beginning of the year. In

short, this type of contribution is extremely valuable in giving predictability.

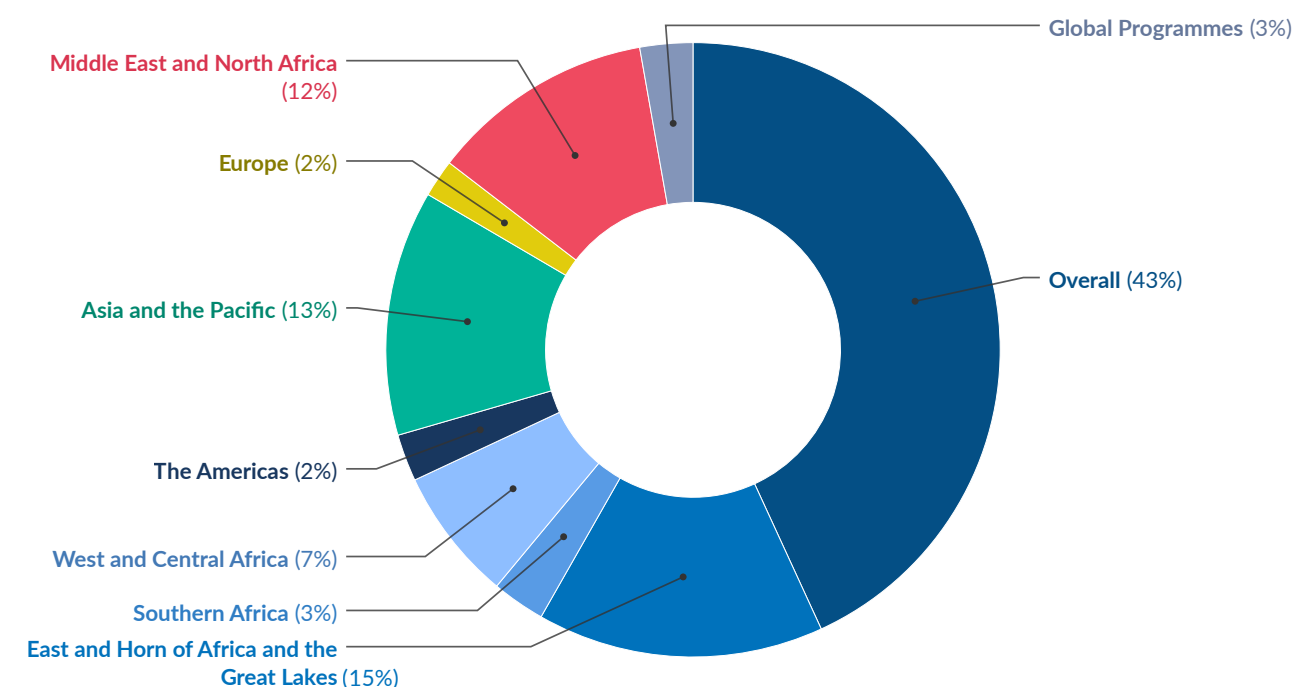
Levels of earmarking of multi-year funds for 2023

■ Unearmarked ■ Softly earmarked ■ Earmarked ■ Tightly earmarked

% of earmarking



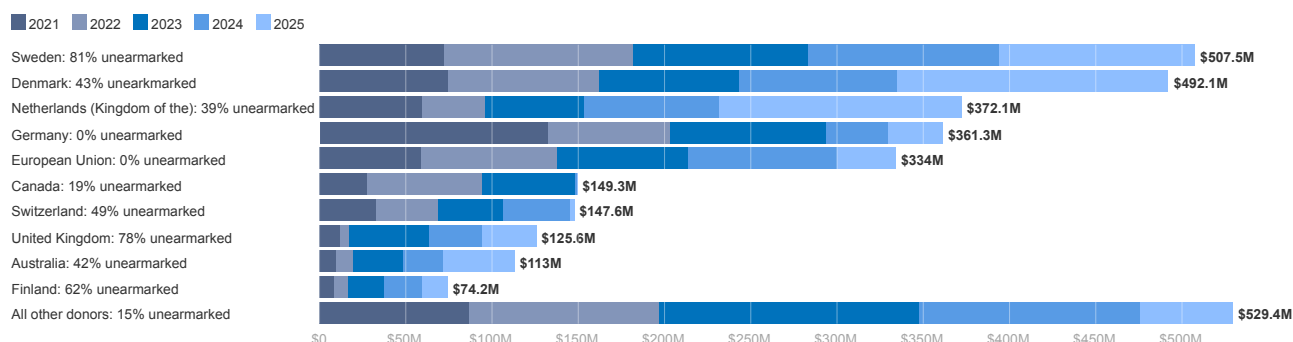
Regions of earmarking of multi-years funds



Multi-year funding for use in 2023 amounted to \$746 million, higher than the \$618.3 million available for use in 2022. The top five providers of multi-year funding in 2023 were Sweden, Germany, Denmark, the European Union, and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Altogether, their contributions for 2023 constituted 55% of the multi-year funding received by UNHCR for use that year.

The unearmarked portion of multi-year funding received for use in 2023 was higher compared to what was received for use in 2022 (\$266.3 million in 2023 compared to \$194.7 million for 2022). Nonetheless, with 42% of multi-year funding for use in 2023 still earmarked at country level or below, this meant that the level of predictability was not shared equally across operations.

Top ten donors of multi-year contributions | 2021 - 2025

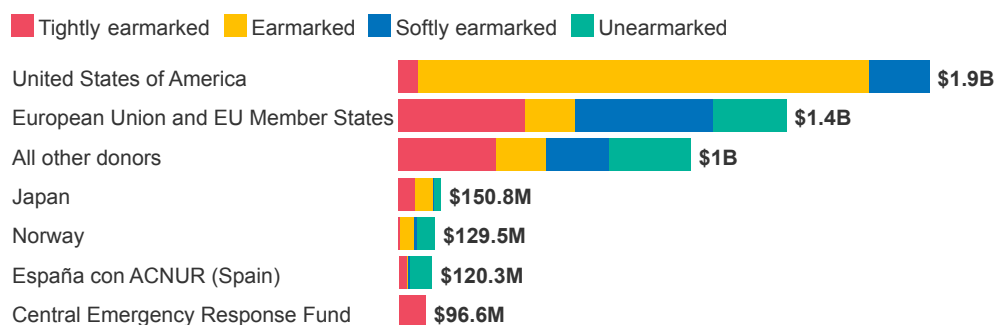


Diversity

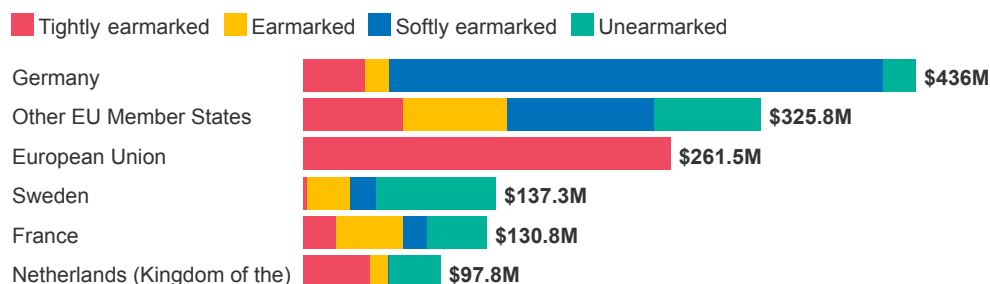
The income received from the top 10 donors in 2023 constituted 71% of all contributions, compared to 69% in 2022. Since 2019, the profile of the top 10 donors has remained fairly consistent, with several notable exceptions. In 2022, four private sector donors (USA for UNHCR, Sweden for UNHCR,

Japan for UNHCR, and España con ACNUR) were among the top 10. Since 2021, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is no longer in the top 10. France joined the top 10 in 2021 and 2023. CERF was also a top 10 donor to UNHCR in 2020 and 2023.

Quality of income among top donors | 2023



European Union and EU Member States



The profile of the top 10 donors over the last five years underlines that **the private sector remains an important partner for UNHCR**, including in complementing the financial support provided by member States. One private sector partner that has remained consistently in the top 10 since 2019 is España con ACNUR.

Other sources of diversification for UNHCR are UN pooled funds, UN agencies, and intergovernmental donors (other than the EU). Income from this stream increased by \$22 million, or 15%, from \$183 million in 2022 to \$210 million in 2023. The growth was largely due to a \$26 million increase from CERF, \$15 million from UN Joint Programmes, and \$10 million from Education Cannot Wait, which increased by 55% owing to a multi-year project for over \$12 million to the Uganda operation. These contributions offset decreases of \$14 million from country-based pooled funds and \$11 million from the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan.

Income from CERF increased by 37% to \$97 million and it became UNHCR's 10th largest donor in 2023. This was primarily due to the **Sudan situation**, where CERF was UNHCR's second-largest donor with timely funding to the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan during the early days of the emergency. UNHCR remained the third largest beneficiary agency of the CERF with 13.5% of the total \$663 million disbursed in 2023. Funding

from UN Joint Programmes increased by 188% to \$23 million in 2023, primarily through a joint programme in Bangladesh, and lastly, funding from Education Cannot Wait.

In line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) as well as UNHCR's "[Strategy on engaging with development actors](#)", UNHCR operations built strong partnerships with development actors to pursue the protection and solutions objectives within their multi-year strategies. While the priority was on leveraging development partners' political, financial and technical capacities to promote national inclusion, UNHCR operations also established operational partnerships with development actors, including by implementing or co-implementing projects funded by them.

Development funding has represented 3-5% of UNHCR's global income over the past five years. In 2023, UNHCR raised \$213 million through development contributions, representing 4.4% of its overall voluntary contributions. Together with ongoing multi-year projects, **more than 50 UNHCR operations implemented development-funded activities in 2023**, mainly in Asia (36%), the Middle East and North Africa (21%), the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (21%), and West and Central Africa (7%). Thematically, development contributions in 2023 covered areas such as self-reliance and livelihoods, education, peace and governance, housing and infrastructure, and WASH.



España con ACNUR's enduring commitment as a leading private sector donor since 2019

España con ACNUR has demonstrated the remarkable dedication of the Spanish people and Spanish companies to the refugee cause. It has consistently ranked in the top 10 global donors since 2019. España con ACNUR's strong and dedicated team has effectively mobilized individual donors, rallying 500,000 supporters by 2023.

España con ACNUR's sustained growth owes a great deal to the team's ability to engage a diverse range of donors in supporting UNHCR's work, from individuals to corporations and foundations. Their contributions illustrate the solidarity and generosity of Spanish civil society towards forcibly displaced individuals as well as the crucial role of National Partners in engaging with the private sector to leverage income and partnerships for positive change.



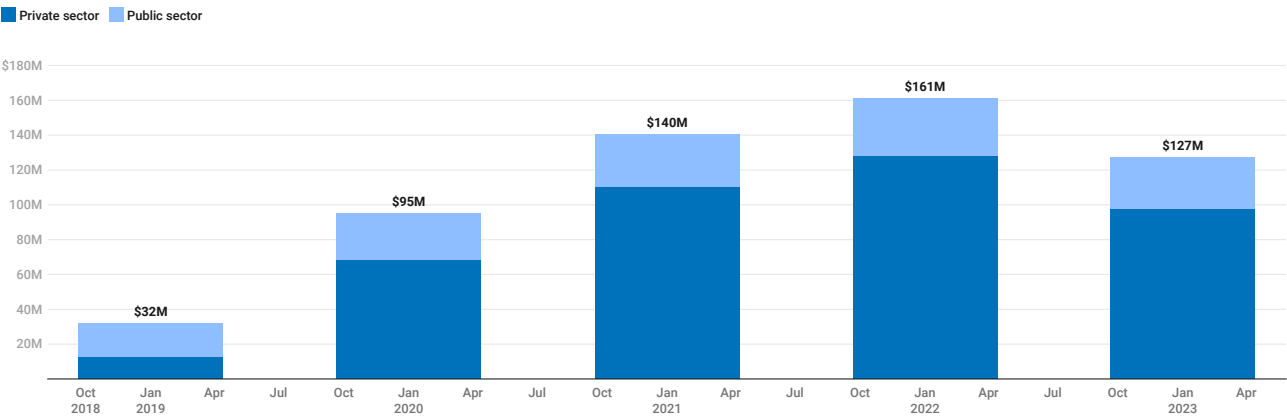
© España con ACNUR

Contributions in kind

As well as financial contributions, UNHCR also receives contributions in kind, including goods provided for distribution to populations served by UNHCR and services such as office premises and logistics. Contributions in kind grew rapidly

from 2019 to 2022 but declined in 2023, as the total provided by the private sector fell back below \$100 million, from \$128 million in 2022.

Growth of in-kind contributions | 2019 - 2023 (USD millions)



Inditex fashions hope through continued refugee support

Inditex has generously supplied multiple shipments of clothing and footwear, primarily to forcibly displaced people in Uganda, with a total value exceeding \$20 million. After High Commissioner Filippo Grandi's visit to INDITEX's headquarters in Arteixo in August 2023, UNHCR and Inditex set up a joint task force to foster knowledge exchange on the environmental sustainability of in-kind donations.

The visit underscored the ways corporate partnerships can help respond to the challenges faced by refugees, in addition to financial contributions.



Donor visibility

UNHCR places significant importance on **visibility for flexible, including unearmarked**, funding. Donors of this type of funding are acknowledged in funding updates, in multi-media content, web stories, traditional media, social media, digital diplomacy by senior leadership, as well as printed visibility.

Specific visibility plans are made for UNHCR's main donors of flexible funding, such as Sweden, Norway, and Germany. Such plans recognize the donor's geographic and thematic priorities, as well as which audiences it needs to reach. They also guide visibility efforts across regions, ensuring that refugee voices are at the centre of storytelling and linking donor contributions to concrete results, especially in emergencies and forgotten crises.

UNHCR also acknowledges its biggest donors of softly or more earmarked funding, such as the U.S., through careful planning and across platforms. In 2023, UNHCR produced multiple videos, stories, social media posts, and other visibility products, highlighting the impact of U.S. funding to UNHCR programmes globally.

To learn more about the impact of donors' support to UNHCR in 2023, [visit the donor pages](#).



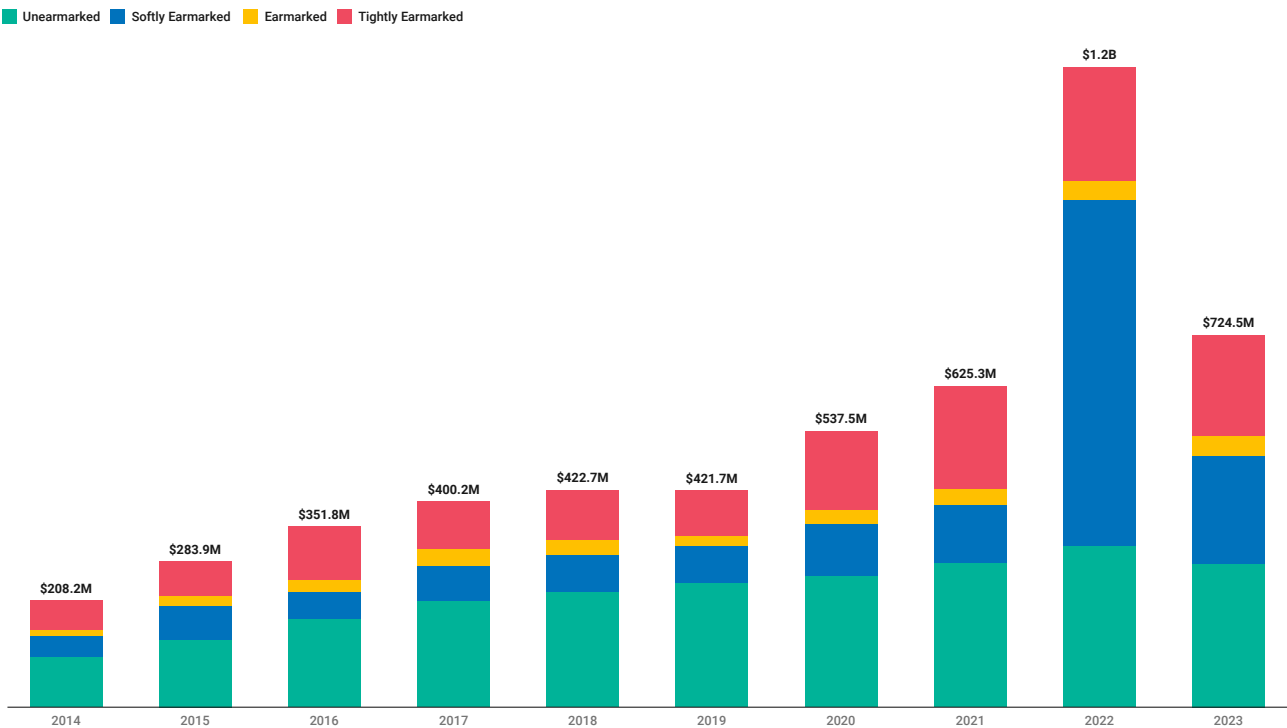
Raising funds from the private sector

Angelina Peter, a mother of eight and an IDP living in Malakal walks home with a bunch of firewood. Incidents of floods in Fangaka are increasing in frequency and severity, with the last three years recording the worst floods in living memory history. Residents of Fangak continue to face serious challenges including inadequate food supply. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

In 2023, voluntary contributions to UNHCR from individuals and the private sector reached \$724 million, constituting **15% of UNHCR's overall income**. This followed the exceptional emergency donor response to Ukraine in 2022.

Like many other organizations, UNHCR saw a decrease in private sector funding in 2023 but managed to mitigate the effects of this better than many through our donor development efforts.

Private sector contributions | 2014 - 2023



This meant that overall trends continued an upward trajectory when 2022 is put in context, and when compared to 2021 and previous years.

The **total income** transferred to UNHCR from 3.1 million individual donors **amounted to \$404 million**. Financial support also came from UNHCR's partnerships with over 380 entities, which contributed \$320 million, including \$98 million in in-kind gifts.

The **private sector** also continued as an important source of unearmarked funding. Of total private sector contributions, \$278 million or 38% was unearmarked.

UNHCR's **thematic fundraising campaigns** continued to show growth and success, raising over \$61 million in 2023. The winter campaign, in particular, was a major success, more than doubling income since 2021 to raise \$45.8 million.

The **Aiming Higher campaign** to increase refugee enrolment in tertiary education reached a quarter of its \$100 million target after only three years of the ten-year initiative. This has seen refugee enrolment in higher education rise from 3% to 7% and

is an excellent example of how campaigns can deliver direct life-changing impact for refugees and contribute to increased funding.

Our efforts to raise new funds from innovative financing opportunities have already shown signs of success and will be even more important in the coming years.

In April, the **Green Financing Facility** (GFF) to solarize UNHCR offices received a significant \$23.7 million contribution from the IKEA Foundation, which added to existing investment from the German and Swedish Governments. The GFF could see up to 25% of financial savings for offices involved.

A record \$46 million was also raised through Islamic philanthropy for nearly 2 million refugees and IDPs in 23 countries during 2023, an almost 20% increase from 2022.

These successes and the innovation that came with them, along with the commitment to a more holistic view of what private sector engagement means, will be key in underpinning UNHCR's new private sector engagement strategy for 2024.



MBRGI sustains displaced families with food assistance and livelihoods support

Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives (MBRGI) continued its commitment to supporting forcibly displaced families globally in 2023, **donating \$26 million to UNHCR** since 2021 including \$11.3 million in 2023 for vital food assistance and sustainable livelihood projects in Asia and Africa and additionally pledging \$11.5 million to support UNHCR's programmes at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023.

MBRGI's contribution has enabled over 77,000 refugees in India to access food and redirect their limited financial resources towards other pressing needs. MBRGI's contribution has filled critical gaps in funding and enhanced the overall well-being and health of refugees.





A 40-year-old man with his two-year old daughter, near their home on the outskirts of Kabul. The family fled their home in Jalalabad 10 years ago because of fighting. The daughter has been suffering from a fever for the past week because of winter. Afghanistan. Displaced families cope with winter cold and food shortages Kabul. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

National partners

Entrusted with UNHCR's name, logo, and brand, they **mobilize resources and awareness** on its behalf for forcibly displaced and stateless people. UNHCR relies on the support of **11 National Partners**, each established as an independent, non-governmental organization in the country where it operates. The funding they have collectively raised in recent years has risen rapidly, with a total income of \$434.2 million in 2023 including \$172.4 million in unearmarked funding. In 2023, they facilitated 59% of individual and private sector donations coming to UNHCR, and 24% of all unearmarked funding.

Australia for UNHCR

[78,812 individual donors | established in 2000]

In 2023, Australia for UNHCR mobilized funds for emergencies in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Libya, Bangladesh, the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye. A major campaign in 2023 focused on sport for protection, collaborating with FIFA to promote the Women's World Cup, as well as refugee athletes. Australia for UNHCR also expanded its Islamic Philanthropy programme. In 2023, Islamic Relief Australia donated \$134,000 to Zakat-compliant programmes, while Okay Bears, an online community selling digital art, donated \$67,000 to support a Zakat-compliant cash assistance programme in Indonesia. Their partnership with the IMC Foundation also led to a donation of \$88,000 towards UNHCR's Primary Impact programme in Ethiopia.

Aotearoa New Zealand for UNHCR

[3,159 individual donors | established in 2022]

Aotearoa New Zealand, supported by Australia for UNHCR, has 3,000 active donors, mostly acquired through face-to-face fundraising, resulting in 80% of funds being regular donations. In 2023, the organization raised \$235,000. The emergency in Ukraine was the most successful campaign, raising almost \$34,000.

España con ACNUR (Spain for UNHCR)

[493,727 individual donors | established in 1993]

In 2023, España con ACNUR raised \$120.3 million. Critically, most of this funding was unearmarked. In the same year, España con ACNUR engaged nearly 500,000 active regular donors and raised a record \$8.3 million from Spain's decentralized governments.

(See as well the highlight on España con ACNUR in the [main income analysis section](#))

Fundación ACNUR Argentina

[55,766 individual donors | established in 2018]

Fundación ACNUR Argentina (Argentina for UNHCR) launched its "Ponchos Azules" campaign in 2023, which resulted in 1 million people signing a petition in support of UNHCR's [Hope Away from Home campaign](#). It also held a fourth "Concert with Refugees", a live performance featuring local celebrities and renowned musicians collaborating with refugees and migrants before an audience of almost 2,000 at one of Buenos Aires' premier theatres. The show was broadcasted on the Paramount+ channel, reaching an audience of close to 300,000.

Portugal com ACNUR**[5,095 individual donors | established in 2023]**

In its first full year of operation and supported by España con ACNUR, Portugal com ACNUR recruited more than 4,000 new committed regular donors and an awareness-raising strategy generated activities in more than 100 universities, schools and cultural centres, and plans were developed for more visibility in the media.

Japan for UNHCR**[286,385 individual donors | established in 2000]**

In 2023, Japan for UNHCR raised \$73.8 million. Critically, most of this funding was unearmarked. Following the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria in 2023, Japan for UNHCR gained 50,000 new donors who supported UNHCR's life-saving work worldwide.

Sweden for UNHCR**[332,517 individual donors | established in 2013]**

Sweden for UNHCR's contribution to UNHCR in 2023 exceeded a target originally set for 2025, after a 70% increase in donations in just two years. During its 2023 Christmas campaign, \$8.5 million (85 million SEK) were raised from Swedish donors. This includes \$5.4 million (54 million SEK) specifically for education activities, driven by a matching pledge from the Akelius Foundation giving a total of \$13.9 million (139 million SEK). The \$5.4 million (54 million SEK) matched by Akelius Foundation will be donated 2024-2026 and will fund a programme on education. Large donations came from Solvatten, Better Shelter, H&M Group and Essity who provided a generous cash contribution and donations of 1.4 million diapers, 2.4 million sanitary pads and 90,000 rolls of toilet paper to aid in the Ukraine and Türkiye and Syria earthquake emergencies.

Switzerland for UNHCR**[25,408 individual donors | established in 2020]**

In 2023, Switzerland for UNHCR raised \$17.9 million in income to UNHCR. Following the outbreak of the war in Sudan, Switzerland for UNHCR teamed up with the FIFA Foundation to provide thousands of families with life-saving assistance. Stepping up with care and compassion, the foundation rapidly mobilized its resources to extend support to an underfunded

emergency that had largely escaped the news headlines.

The partnership with the FIFA Foundation is underscoring the crucial role that organizations beyond traditional humanitarian actors can play through swift action in the face of adversity. In 2023, the team also launched a novel community-supported approach to advancing humanitarian aid through a charity stake pool on the Cardano Blockchain. This initiative is a positive example of how new solutions can bridge the gap between traditional funding models and blockchain solutions.

United Kingdom for UNHCR**[52,346 individual donors | established in 2020]**

United Kingdom for UNHCR attracted donations in 2023 from more than 52,000 individuals, who joined philanthropic and corporate partners to provide \$22.4 million. Its social media presence grew by 50% to reach 54,000 followers and helped generate over 1,000 pieces of media coverage about the refugee cause. Their "storyteller" programme, providing a national platform for refugees to share their own stories, had contributors from ten countries and reached UK audiences through media, film, photography and events. Throughout 2023, UK for UNHCR supported UNHCR's relief efforts in countries such as the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Armenia, Libya, Sudan, Ethiopia and Myanmar, and across the Horn of Africa.

UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe**[245,537 individual donors | established in 1980]**

In Germany, UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe, UNHCR's oldest National Partner, has more than doubled its funding to UNHCR in the last five years, with more than 245,000 donors. This growth was underpinned by bold external communications and partnerships with entities such as Volkswagen, adidas and the German Postal Code Lottery,

USA for UNHCR**[138,606 individual donors | established in 1989]**

USA for UNHCR generated \$82.6 million in income during 2023. A combination of new and long-standing partners like YouTube and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – as well as continued efforts in the U.S. to lift the voices of refugees – generated both financial support and solidarity for forcibly displaced and stateless people around the world.



When humanitarian emergencies strike, the private sector gives rapidly and generously

The private sector raced to respond to crises in 2023, a year when UNHCR issued a record number of emergency declarations. Many companies and individuals reacted rapidly and generously when earthquakes hit Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic in February. Among the many companies ramping up emergency aid efforts was the financial technology platform **Adyen**. Adyen encouraged their merchants, such as H&M, Bodyshop, and UNIQLO, to active Adyen Giving, enabling their customers to donate to UNHCR. Adyen matched their donations, resulting in a remarkable total of \$6.9 million raised. Furthermore, Adyen also committed \$1.1 million to UNHCR's Emergency Action Fund in 2023.

More support came from AUDI AG, a partner of UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe, which contributed €1 million to the earthquake appeal, while in Australia, the [Emergency Action Alliance](#), a coalition of 15 charities, raised millions of dollars, including \$256,000 for Australia for UNHCR. Meanwhile, fintech company **Revolut Ltd.** enabled its account holders to [donate more than £1 million to UK for UNHCR](#) through its app. This included £403,000 donated in 2023, supporting not only the earthquake response, but also survivors of Libya's floods and people affected by the war in Ukraine. Revolut also simplified its requirements for opening a bank account for Ukrainians, providing quick access to funds for people fleeing their homes. A dedicated collaborator of USA for UNHCR, the **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**, continuously provided support to [Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced people](#). Guided by faith-based principles, the Church expanded its efforts to support the [Sudan emergency](#) response in Chad, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. The crucial support from these partners demonstrates the power of collective action when organizations step up to provide critical support to millions of displaced people.



© UNHCR/Emrah Gürel

[Click here for a complete set of financial tables for 2023](#) including:

- Budget and expenditure overview
- Budget and expenditure by Outcome Area
- Flexible funding
- Total contributions

[Click here for regional financial information](#)



Impact Area 1

Hanina and her 2-year-old daughter Mariam fled from the conflict in Sudan and sought asylum in Egypt, where they registered with UNHCR. They were among 30 newly arrived Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers attending an information session in Cairo, where Hanina spoke to UNHCR Senior Community-Based Protection Assistant Henda Ahmed about crafting a new chapter in Egypt. Hanina hopes for an end to the conflict soon and yearns to return to her roots and nurture Mariam in the land of her own upbringing. © UNHCR/Jaime Giménez

PROTECT: Attaining favourable protection environments

In 2023, more than 122 million people found themselves needing international protection, stateless, or seeking safety from conflict, violence or serious public disorder in their own country. The **global refugee population grew by 2.8 million to 37.4 million** and a record **6.86 million people were still seeking asylum** at the end of the year, 26% more than at the end of 2022. Conflicts in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Myanmar and violence in Haiti were among the major drivers of new displacement, and **63.3 million people ended the year displaced in their own country**, an increase of 5.9 million from 2022.

Many of the countries showing most openness to refugees in 2023 were those already struggling with their own economic or political fragility.

People seeking international protection need to be **able to access asylum procedures**. UNHCR operations in 75 countries reported on the numbers who were able to do so in both 2022 and 2023. The proportion declined in 17 of those countries in 2023 but improved in 14. Globally, asylum processing appeared to speed up slightly, with an average of **432 days required to process each claim**, compared to 489 days in 2022.

In 2023, 86 countries out of 102 reported that more than 75% of refugees and asylum-seekers were able to **move freely within their country of residence**, similar to 2022.

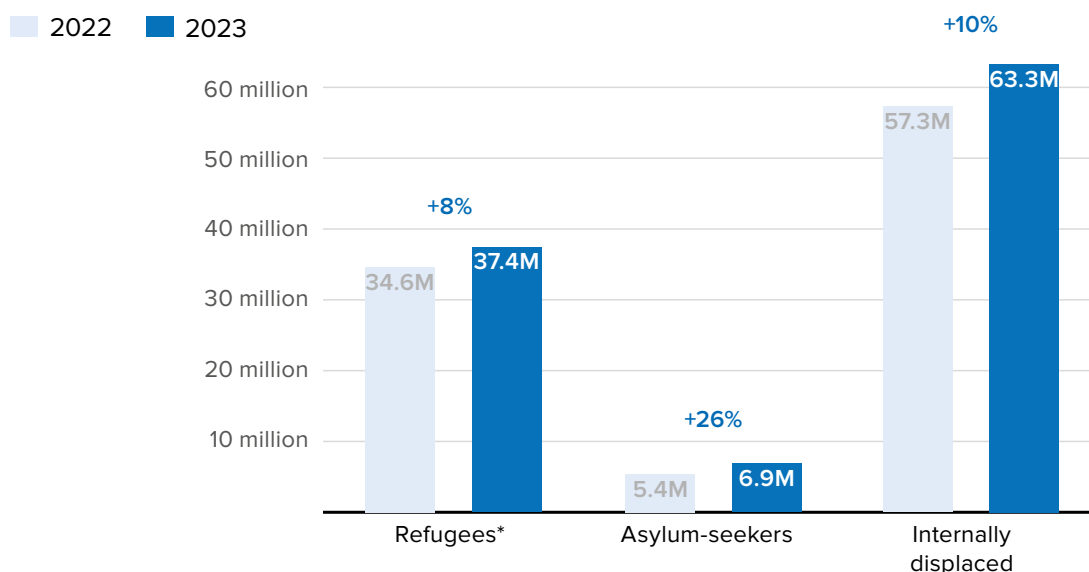
Deportation and refoulement of asylum-seekers and refugees remain a key concern in all regions. Among the millions seeking asylum, according to limited data available to UNHCR in 101 countries, 92,230 were refouled in contravention of international law. This number is only a fraction of the total number of persons refouled across the globe. Refoulement remains a serious problem worldwide, including because of many instances of arbitrary expulsion and large-scale pushback and other non-entry measures at borders.

Many thousands of refugees and asylum-seekers who had fled from danger joined migrants on **risky journeys** across seas, jungles and deserts. An unprecedented half a million people trekked through the Darien jungle in Panama in a desperate search for safety or just a better life. On the [Mediterranean Sea](#) routes, UNHCR is aware of at least 3,311 dead or missing at sea during the year, compared to 2,674 in 2022.

UNHCR operations reported an increase in the numbers of people who had **legally recognized identity documents** or credentials. NHCR noted that there were more [countries](#) in 2023 where the **legal framework** was in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol, and the statelessness conventions, or progressing towards alignment, than in 2022 and, overall, **19.3 million people received protection services** in 163 countries in 2023. In one remarkable example, [Chad](#) domesticated international and regional conventions related to refugee protection just as it welcomed more than 500,000 refugees from Sudan, almost a doubling of its refugee population.

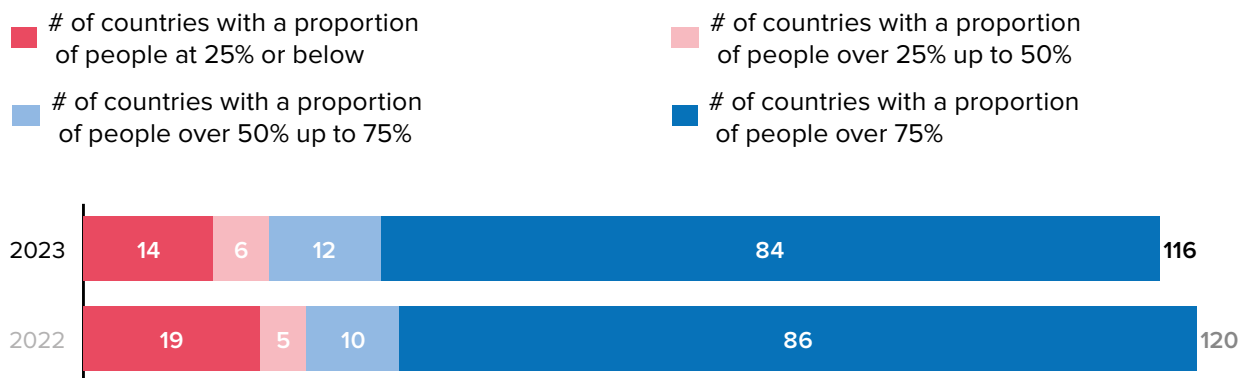
The legal framework combating **statelessness** took another step forward as the Republic of the Congo became State party to both statelessness conventions, and several other countries took concrete steps towards accession.

Population growth | 2022-2023

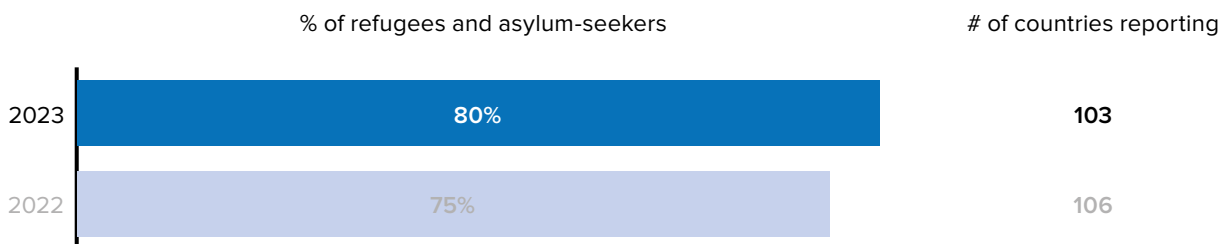


*Includes people in a refugee-like situation and Other people in need of international protection.

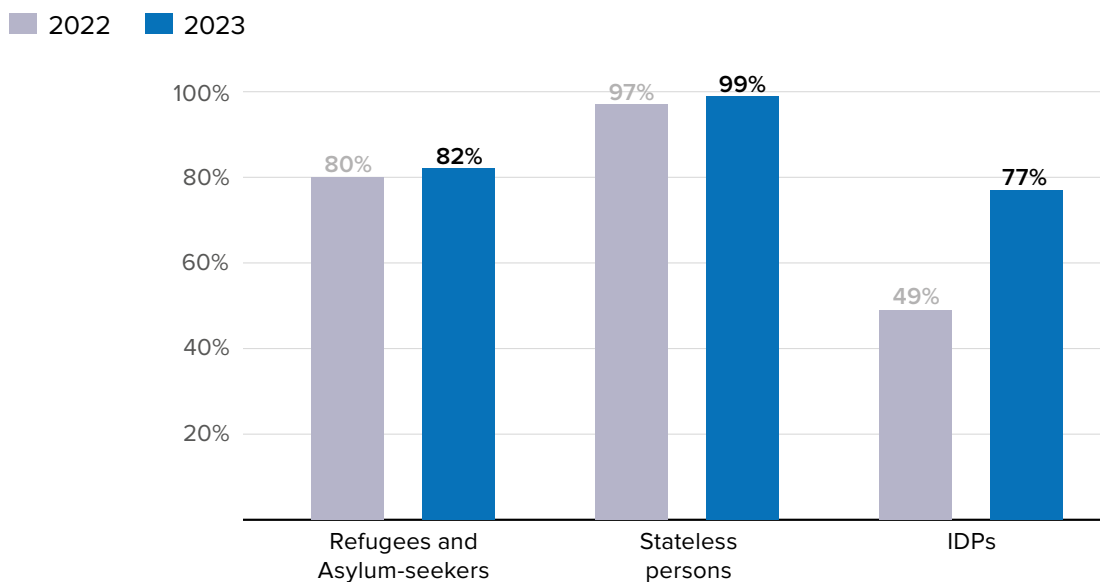
1.1 Proportion of people seeking international protection who are able to access asylum procedures | 2022 - 2023



1.2 Proportion of people who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence



Estimated % of people with legally recognized identity documents or credentials



Financial overview

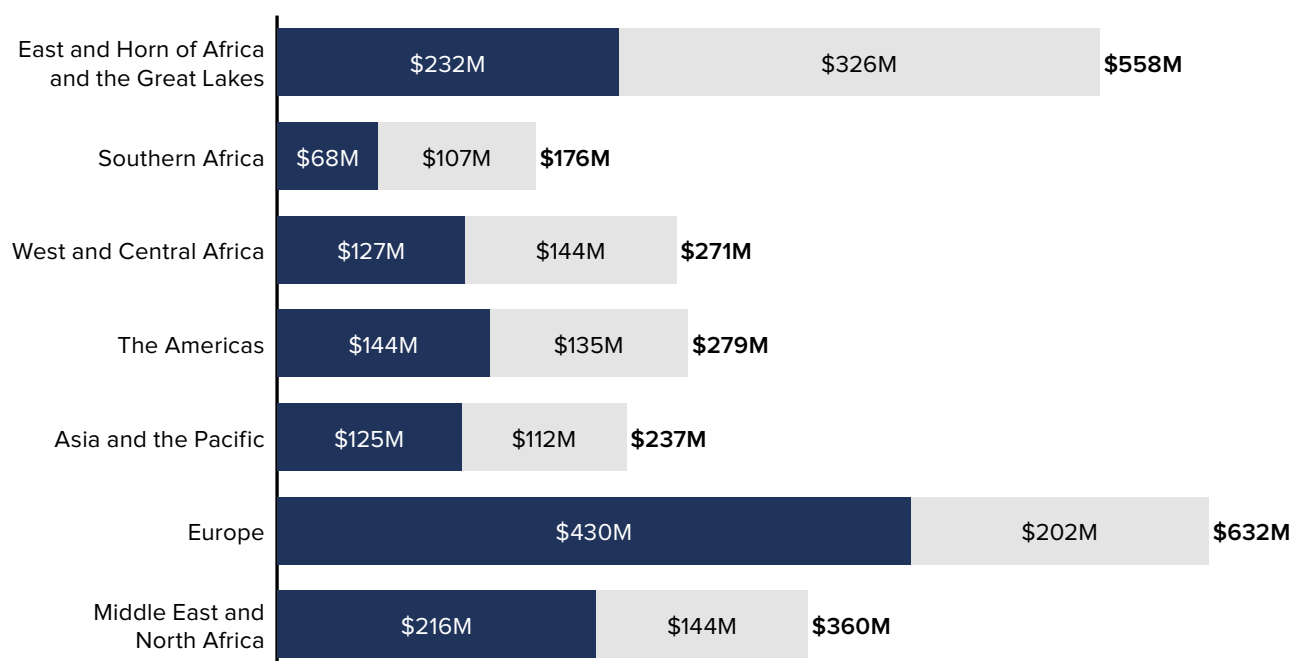
Global expenditure and budget for Impact Area "Protect"

\$1.530 billion spent against a budget of **\$2.702 billion**
\$1.172 billion of unmet needs or **43%** of the budget

- UNHCR's 2023 budget for this Impact Area was \$2.702 billion, or 25.8% of programmed activities.
- The largest budgets for this Impact Area were for Sudan, Ethiopia, Türkiye and Moldova.
- Expenditure of \$1.530 billion accounted for 29.6% of UNHCR's total expenditure. This was an increase of \$313.6 million or 25.8% when compared to \$1.216 billion in 2022.

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Attaining favourable protection environments

■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.



Impact Area 2

Tens of thousands of Afghans began returning to the country in late 2023 after the Government of Pakistan announced a decree on the deportation of undocumented foreigners. Those returning were mostly undocumented Afghans, but some were refugees. Many said they had faced coercion and threats. UNHCR and partners conducted protection monitoring and provided assistance as part of an inter-agency response led by IOM.
© UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production

RESPOND: Realizing rights in safe environments

People can only realize their rights in a safe environment if they find safety and security, protected against the **risks of arbitrary detention, gender-based violence, trafficking** in persons and many other violations and dangers. They also need at least to have the very **basics required for a stable life**: a roof over their heads, a safe and warm place to sleep, a working toilet, access to health care, enough food to keep hunger at bay, and sufficient supplies of clean water and fuel.

2023 saw a peak in the number of **displacement emergencies** declared by UNHCR, and although the Office was able to assist millions with core relief items, cash and shelter, the vast disparity between what was needed and what was available grew wider.

This was evident from the spike in the numbers of forcibly displaced and stateless population, the record size of UNHCR's budget that aimed

to meet their needs, and the **unprecedented shortfall in funding**, leaving half those needs entirely unmet. The lack of funding affected the entire humanitarian sector, not only UNHCR. WFP, for example, was forced to cut rations for the people it was trying to support, including refugee populations.

Greater investment and targeted action supporting full **socioeconomic inclusion** is needed to reduce the number of forcibly displaced and stateless people living below the poverty line.

While official data on **poverty** is limited, sources such as the [2023 GCR Indicator Report](#) show that refugees and other vulnerable groups were disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and at a higher risk of poverty relative to nationals. Indeed, in countries where official poverty data exists, the likelihood of refugees being poor compared to nationals varied greatly.

In Chile, the poverty rate was 5% higher among refugees, but in Ethiopia and Uganda the poverty rate among refugees was more than double the rate among nationals.

The risk of refugees falling into poverty is minimized when host countries provide a more conducive policy environment allowing for freedom of movement, formal employment and access to social services. Efforts to ensure that refugees and other forcibly displaced people are included in national statistical exercises are leading to additional reliable and comparable poverty data.

For instance, the [World Bank's poverty assessment in the Central Africa Republic](#) provided a deeper understanding of the situation of IDPs as well as a roadmap for the Government and other development partners to address poverty and solutions to internal displacement.

Similar efforts to incorporate refugees and other forcibly displaced people in government-owned, nationally representative household surveys measuring poverty are ongoing in other countries, including Ethiopia, Mali and Uganda.

At a minimum, refugees and asylum-seekers need to reside in **physically safe and secure settlements** with access to basic facilities. In 2023, in about 60% of the 86 countries where UNHCR operations reported such data, more than 75% of refugees and asylum-seekers did reside in such settlements. However, only six of the 24 countries

reporting such data on internally displaced people reported that more than 75% of IDPs resided in physically safe and secure settlements.

In many countries, instead, forcibly displaced and stateless populations live in highly climate-vulnerable areas.

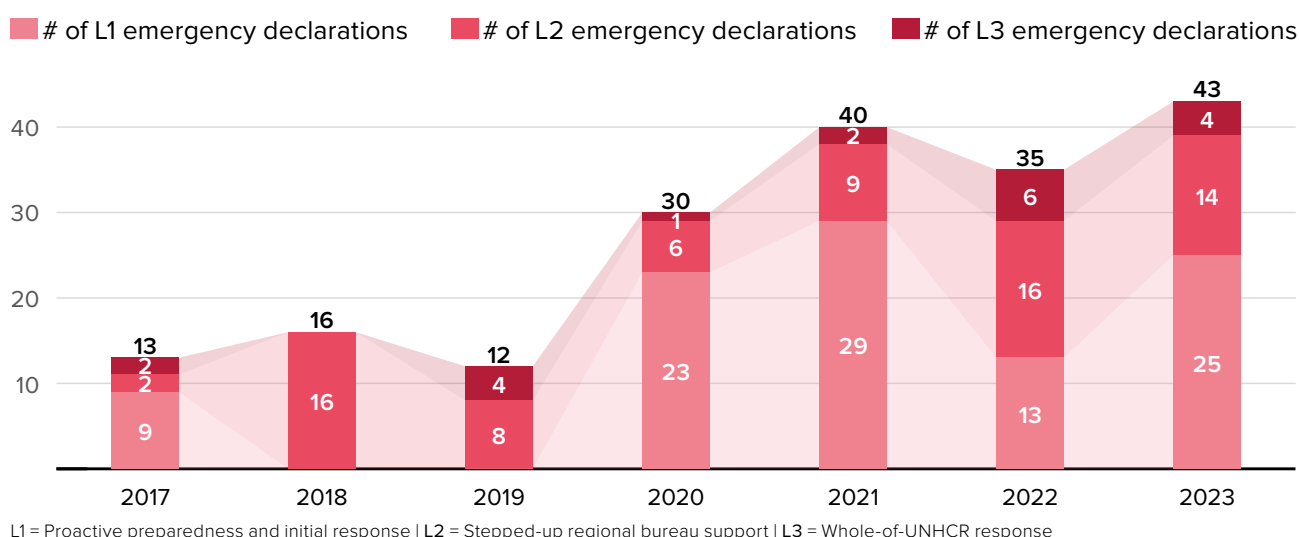
UNHCR operations also reported data on **housing conditions**. Data from 39 countries reporting data on refugee housing and 18 reporting on housing conditions for IDPs showed a modest improvement for both population groups, with 39% living in habitable and affordable housing.

UNHCR operations reported data on **health services** in 99 countries in 2023, and over 75% of refugees and asylum-seekers had access to health services in 75 of those countries.

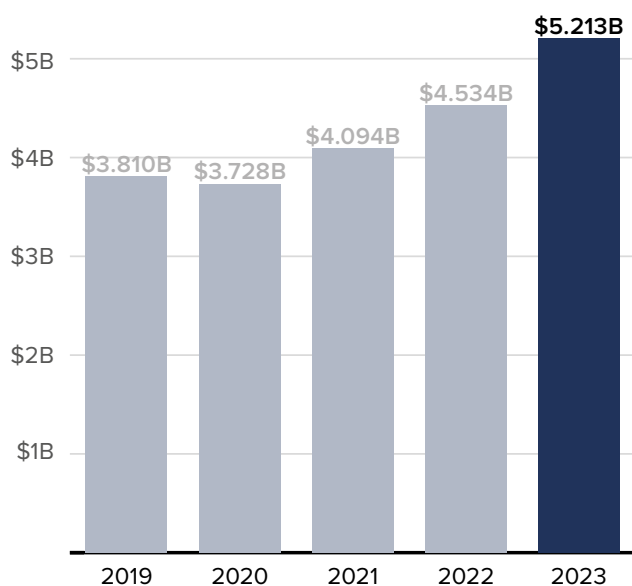
Data from the Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) in 2023 from 117 refugee settlements across 18 countries (mostly in Africa) showed various forms of **malnutrition** persisted among the refugee population. The prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) was 10%, indicating a serious situation, and prevalence of stunting, the chronic form of malnutrition, was 30%, indicating a critical situation.

Refugee children in emergency situations experienced even higher levels of malnutrition, such as in the Sudan situation, where 1 in 3 children were affected by acute malnutrition.

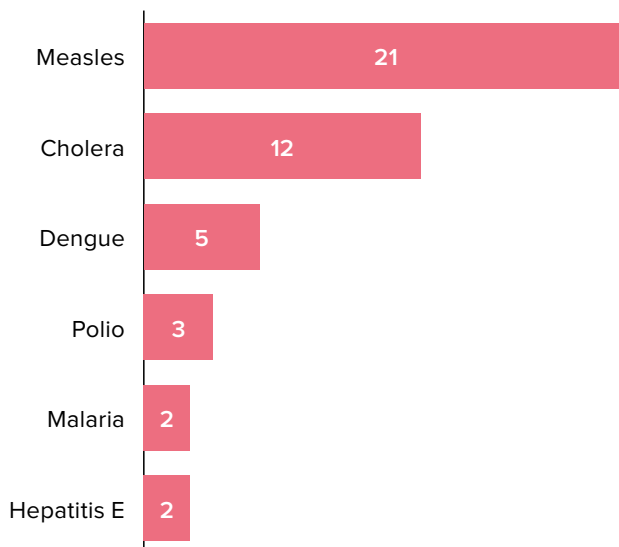
New emergency declarations in 2023



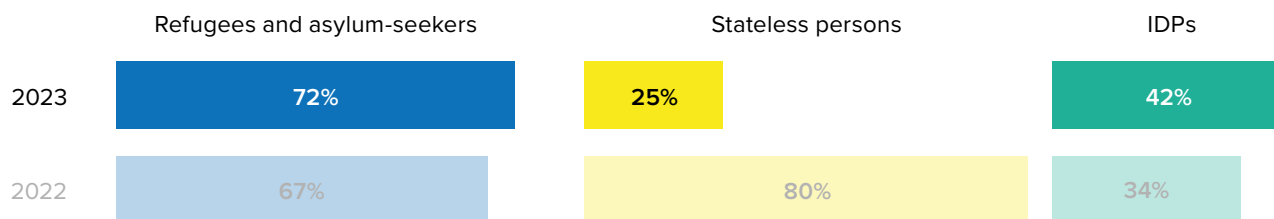
Funding gap (in \$ billion) | 2019-2023



Main outbreaks reported in refugee sites in 2023

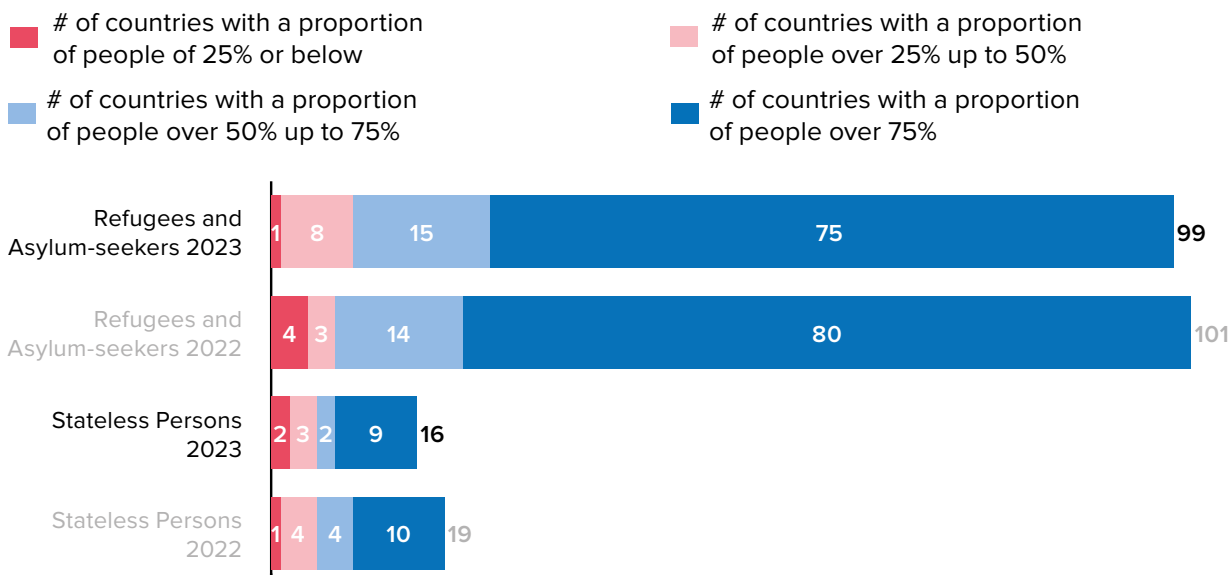


2.2 Proportion of people residing in physically safe and secure settlements with access to basic facilities



Number of countries reporting : In 2022, 87 countries reported on refugees, 16 countries on stateless persons and 24 on IDPs. In 2023, 86 countries reported on refugees, 18 on stateless persons and 24 on IDPs.

2.3 Proportion of people with access to health services



Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Impact Area "Respond"

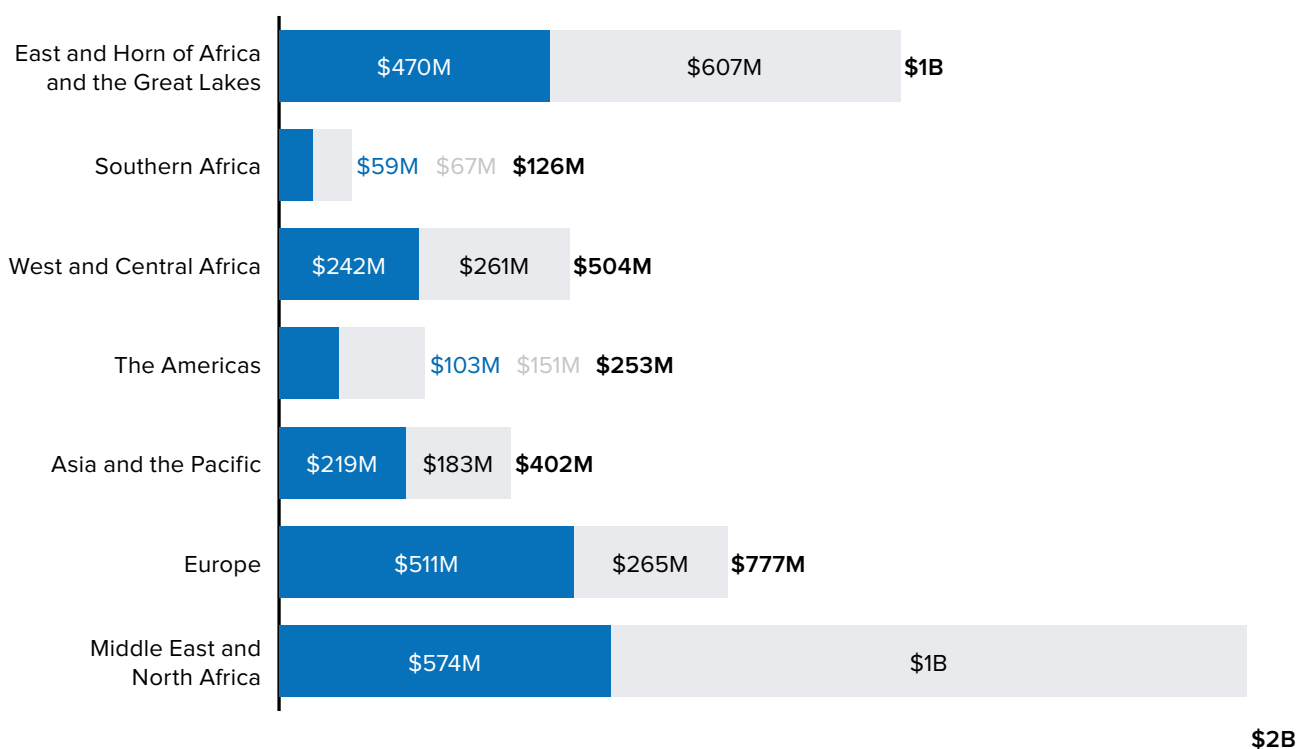
\$2.529 billion spent against a budget of **\$5.236 billion**

\$2.707 billion of unmet needs or **52%** of the budget

- UNHCR's 2023 budget for this Impact Area was \$5.236 billion, or 50% of programmed activities.
- The largest requirements for this Impact Area were for operations in Ukraine, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan.
- Expenditure of \$2.529 billion accounted for 49.0% of total expenditure, a decrease of \$555.5 million, or 18%, compared to \$3.084 billion in 2022.

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Realizing basic rights in safe environments

■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.



Impact Area 3

Lissa* opened a beauty salon in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, with UNHCR's support for her business plan, finance training, stylist certification and seed capital. "I arrived in Guatemala with a backpack, disoriented and without money. By crossing places and borders, here I was able to find protection, help, and motivation to move forward... I have been able to start again." © UNHCR/Victor Sánchez Mejía

EMPOWER: Empowering communities and achieving gender equality

Forced displacement and statelessness make people vulnerable. Their vulnerability is exacerbated if they cannot **participate in decisions concerning their own lives** and they cannot work, study or travel. Women and girls are almost invariably at even greater disadvantage. UNHCR advocates for their full enjoyment of rights, but countries with fragile economies sometimes struggle to integrate large influxes of refugees, and in some countries xenophobic voices may drown out the arguments for welcoming them with kindness and goodwill. A global survey of [attitudes towards refugees](#), with 20,000 respondents in 29 countries, found 74% of people supported the principle of giving people refuge and 33% had taken personal action in support of refugees in the previous 12 months. But the survey, published to mark World Refugee Day in June 2023, also found that support had dampened since 2022.

People were divided on whether their country should accept more refugees, and the majority were concerned that refugees were not genuine.

In 2023, 39 UNHCR country operations reported on the extent of refugees' and asylum-seekers' **participation** in the UNHCR programming cycle, as UNHCR worked to ensure people were included in the decisions that affect their lives. Out of 39 countries, 25 reported "extensive" participation, 11 said it was "moderate". Globally, an estimated 74% of refugees (in the 57 countries reporting data) and 73% of IDPs (in 20 countries) had access to safe feedback and response mechanisms.

The risks and dangers faced by people who have been forced to flee make **basic safety** a pressing need, in ways that may be taken for granted by less vulnerable populations.

As one simple but important measure, UNHCR collects data on the numbers who feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. In 2023, 62 out of 77 countries where UNHCR reported on this indicator said more than 50% of refugee and asylum-seekers reported feeling safe. That result was similar to 2022 for refugees and asylum-seekers, but the data suggested a worsening of the situation for IDPs. A majority of IDPs felt safe in only 10 of the 18 countries reporting in 2023, compared to 14 out of 18 countries in 2022. There was also a lower indicator for stateless people, with 60% feeling safe, down from 94% in 2022, with 17 countries reporting data, up from eight in 2022.

Providing refugee children with **education** is vital to ensure they can realize their potential, and they tend to do particularly well in school, on average. In 2023, an estimated 72% of refugee and asylum-seeking children were enrolled in **primary education**, according to data reported by 90 UNHCR country operations, up from 70% in 2022. Seven countries had fewer than 25% of children enrolled, down from 10 countries in 2022.

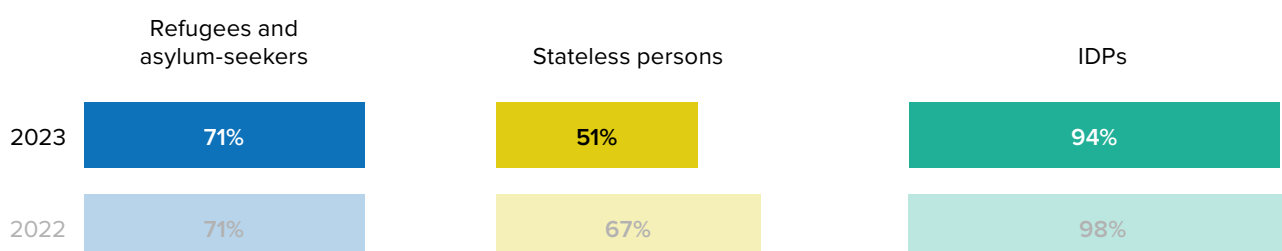
However, for **secondary education** the estimated enrolment rate fell to 45%, from 49% in 2022, and the number of countries reporting enrolment of less than 25% rose to 28, from 25 previously.

In most of the 87 countries where UNHCR collected secondary school enrolment data in 2023, the majority of refugee and asylum-seeking children were not enrolled.

It is estimated that just 7% of refugee youth worldwide were accessing **higher education** as of 2023, compared to a global average of 42%. This figure has, nevertheless, advanced significantly since 2019, when it stood at 1%, and UNHCR has set a target of 15% refugee enrolment in tertiary education by 2030.

Financial inclusion of refugees also increased. In 2023, a majority of refugees lived in countries where financial institutions recognized identity documents issued by the government or by UNHCR to open an account. 44% of asylum-seekers and refugees had an account with a bank or other financial institution, or with a mobile money service provider, based on reporting from 54 countries in 2023. That compares to 30% in 2022, based on data from 51 countries. For IDPs, the percentage decreased from 41% to 34%, based on reports from 12 countries in 2023 and 9 in 2022. However, data from UNHCR operations showed that very few forcibly displaced people saw a positive change in their income during the year.

3.1 Proportion of people who have the legal right to decent work



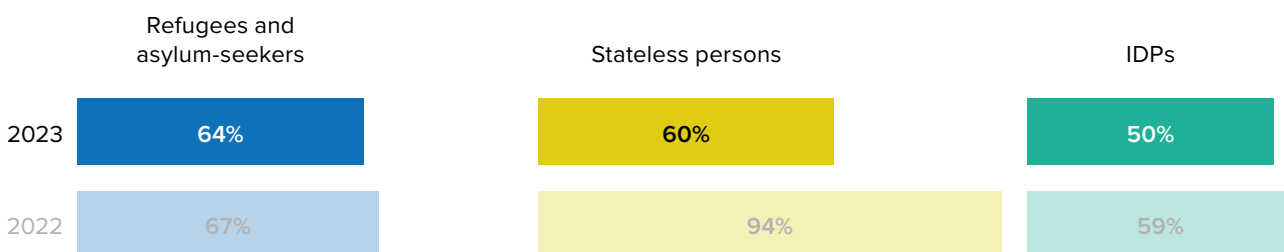
Number of countries reporting : In 2022, 95 countries reporting on refugees, 28 on stateless persons and 7 on IDPs. In 2023, 90 countries reporting on refugees, 28 on stateless persons and 8 on IDPs.

3.2 Proportion of refugee children and young people enrolled in primary and secondary education



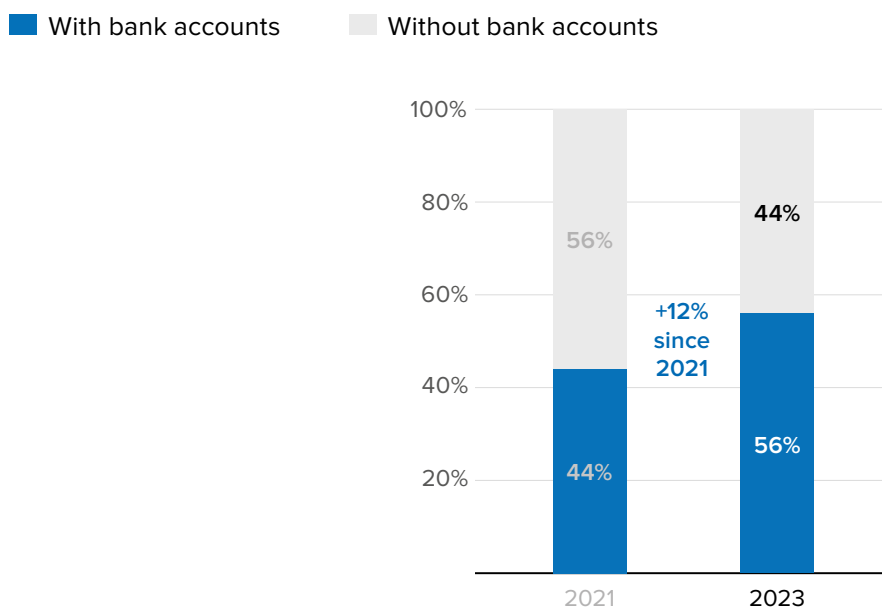
Number of countries reporting : In 2022, 94 countries reporting on primary education and 93 on secondary education. In 2023, 90 countries reporting on primary education and 87 on secondary education.

3.3 Proportion of people feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark



Number of countries reporting : In 2022, 65 countries reporting on refugees, 8 countries on stateless persons and 18 on IDPs. In 2023, 77 countries reporting on refugees, 17 on stateless persons and 18 on IDPs.

Percentage of refugees in countries with full legal recognition of UNHCR or government-issued ID to open bank accounts at financial institutions*



*It may be a bank account or a non-bank institution.

Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Impact Area "Empower"

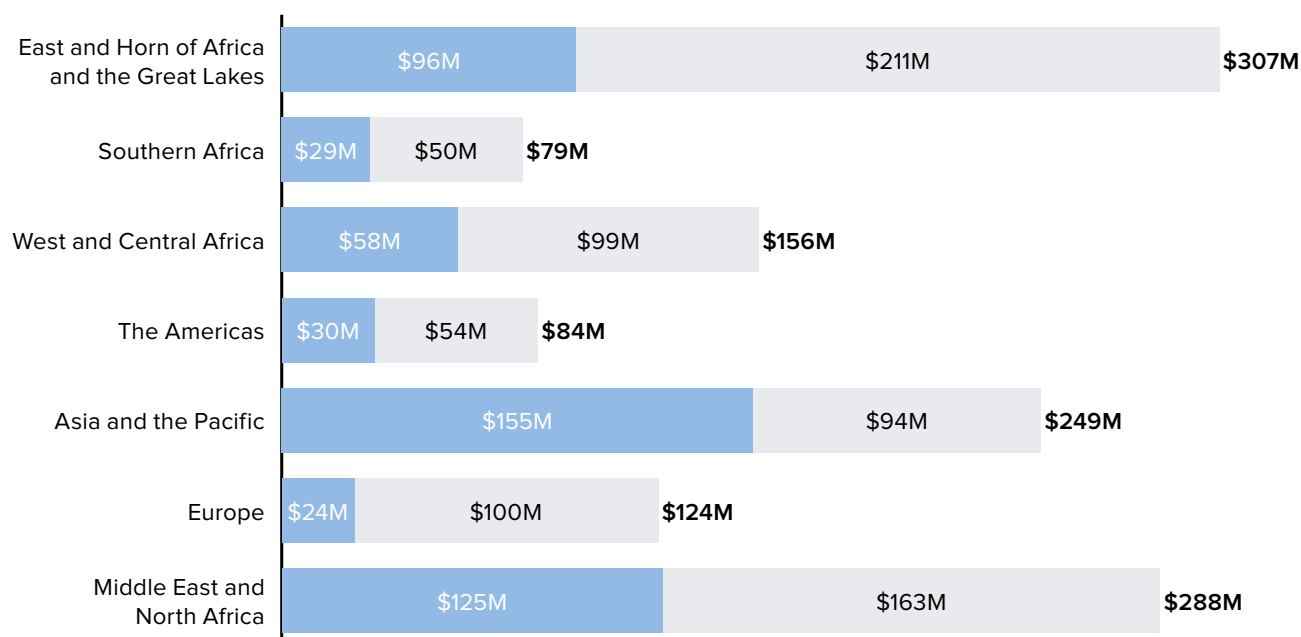
\$588.5 million spent against a budget of **\$1.385 billion**

\$797 million of unmet needs or **58%** of the budget

- UNHCR's 2023 budget for this Impact Area was \$1.385 billion or 13.2% of programmed activities.
- Expenditure of \$588.5 million accounted for 11.4% of total expenditure. This represents a decrease of \$210.3 million or 26.3% when compared to \$798.8million in 2022
- The largest budgets were for Pakistan, South Sudan, Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Empowering communities and achieving gender equality

■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.



Impact Area 4

Emelyne Kabura fled from Burundi in 2015, at the age of 18, but returned to start anew with cash and shelter support from UNHCR and its partners and the Government of Burundi. "With the cash grant, we purchased this plot of land. We then made bricks, erected walls, and used the iron sheets, poles, windows, and doors that were provided to us to complete our house." Emelyne bred rabbits and sold enough to lease some land to grow cassava, and she now makes bread and palm oil for sale. "When we came back through Manyovu border, I was very happy because I was back home, back to a country of milk and honey," she says. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

SOLVE: Securing solutions

The ideal solution to forced displacement should be a **safe, dignified and voluntary return** to the place of origin. Unfortunately, for the vast majority of refugees, 2023 did not bring sufficient peace for them to return to their homeland and millions of people – for example Syrians, Ukrainians, Afghans, South Sudanese, Sudanese, Venezuelans, stateless Rohingya, Congolese and Somalis – spent another year in exile.

Many have spent years, if not decades, waiting, and in 2023 there were **59 protracted refugee situations** – defined as at least 25,000 refugees from the same country living in exile for more than five years – in 37 countries. Surveys of refugees' intentions, such as those of [Syrian](#) and [Ukrainian](#) refugees, consistently show that most hope to return.

Globally, however, at just over 1 million, the number of **refugee returnees** was less than the 1.3 million who returned in 2022. Almost 387,000 of those returning in 2023 were South Sudanese who had fled the conflict in Sudan and returned in less than ideal circumstances.

The number of people **returning from internal displacement** fell by 39% to 5.1 million. More than 4 million of these returns were in just four countries: the DRC, Ukraine, Ethiopia and Central African Republic.

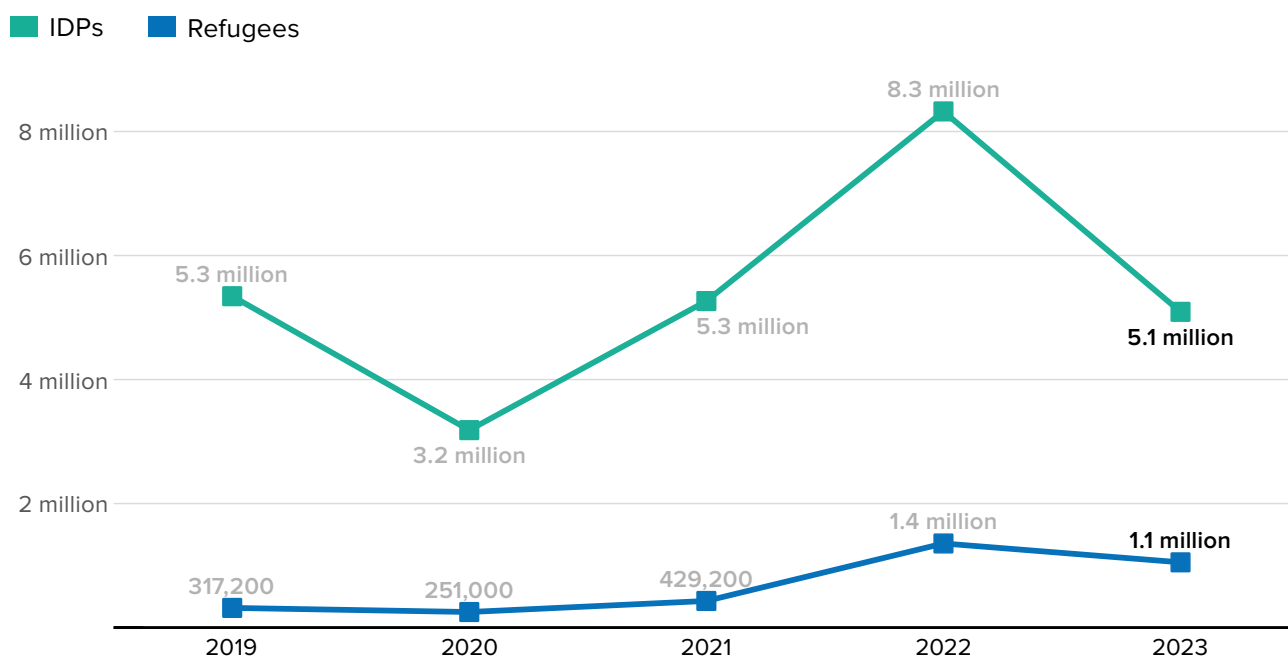
Overall, 158,665 refugees departed on **resettlement** in 17 countries, an increase from 114,280 in 2022, when 22 countries admitted people on resettlement. 96,311 of these departures were facilitated by UNHCR in 2023, the second highest number since the millennium.

However, UNHCR had projected two million people were in [need of resettlement](#) in 2023, and in both 2022 and 2023 the number of departures covered less than 8% of the total estimated need. Moreover, the **average processing time** from the submission of the resettlement case to the actual departure grew to 783 days on average in 2023, from 751 days in 2022.

Granting nationality is a definitive solution to the lack of nationality of **stateless** people. The numbers of stateless people being granted a nationality remained stable at 32,150 people in 2023, compared to 32,426 in 2022. The total number of stateless people and persons of undetermined nationality reported in UNHCR statistics held at around 4.4 million, but the momentum towards gathering better data on statelessness and eradicating it continued.

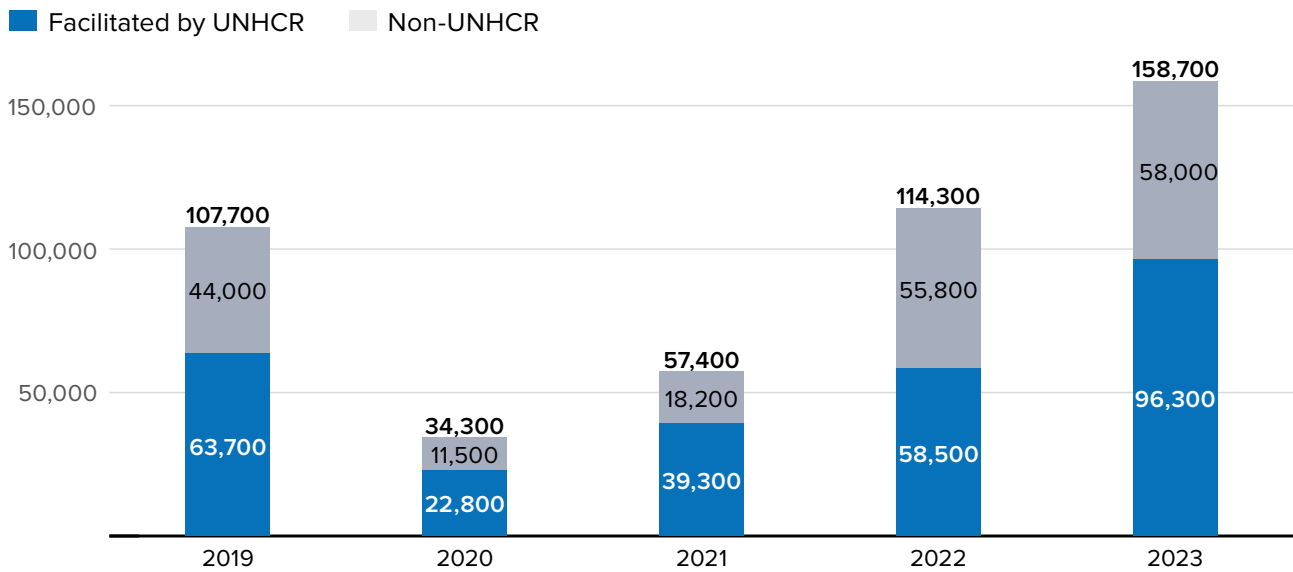
In 2023, 6.4 million refugees were granted residency or confirmed their **residency** status (in 102 countries of asylum). This is a steady trend as in 2022 residency status was granted or confirmed for 6.6 million refugees (in 97 countries). There was however no notable shift in momentum towards local integration, as less than 25% of refugees and asylum-seekers (from 26 of the 41 reporting country operations) had secure access to housing and land, while the majority of refugees and asylum-seekers (from across 49 reporting country operations) were not covered under national social protection systems.

Number of refugee and IDP returns | 2019-2023

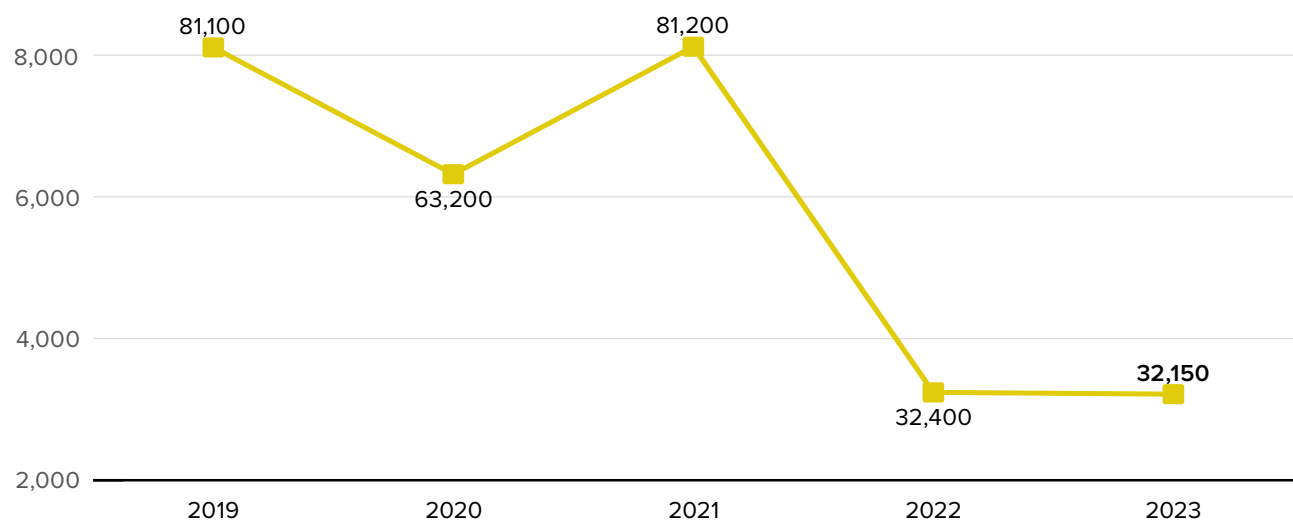


Figures for 2022 were revised and updated after the publication of Global Report 2022.

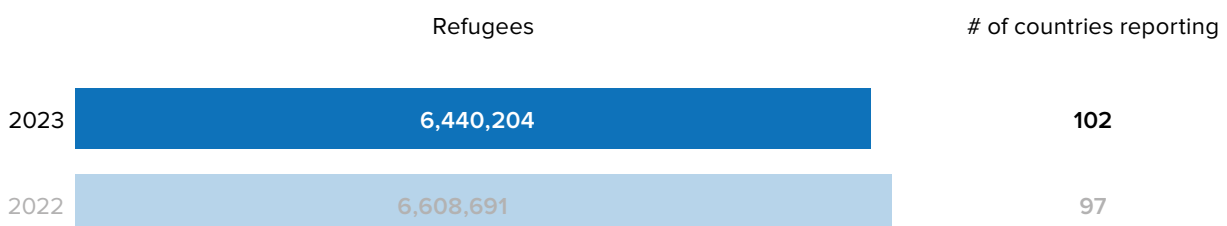
Resettlement departures | 2019-2023



Number of stateless persons who have acquired a nationality or had it confirmed | 2019-2023



Number of refugees who gained residency status or had it confirmed



Financial overview

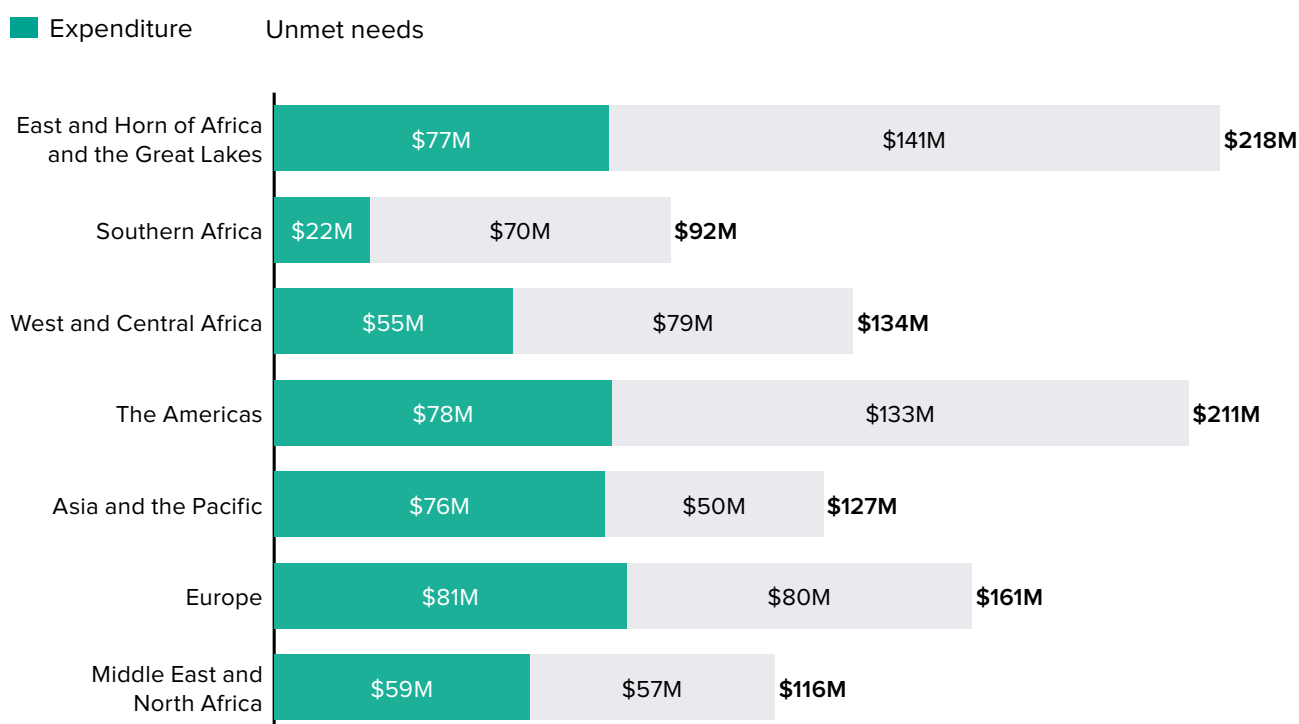
Global expenditure and budget for Impact Area "Solve"

\$512 million spent against a budget of **\$1.140 billion**

\$628 million of unmet needs or **55%** of the budget

- UNHCR's 2023 budget for this Impact Area was \$1.140 billion or 10.9% of programmed activities.
- Expenditure of \$511.7 million accounted for 9.9% of total expenditure, an increase of \$11.8 million or 2.4% when compared to \$499.8 million in 2022.
- The largest budgets were for Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Mexico.

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Securing solutions



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.



Impact Area 5

"If we didn't have this farm, life would be very hard," says Pascalene Muhawe, a Congolese refugee farmer and a single mother of eight, who has benefited from a farming project at Choro Farm in Kenya's Kakuma ward. "My work makes me happy and gives me strength." © UNHCR/Charity Nzomo

INCLUDE: Including forcibly displaced people in public services and systems

Without political solutions to international crises, situations of displacement tend to last for years or even decades, meaning that humanitarian responses are not enough, and a medium-term **development approach** is required. UNHCR aims to generate momentum for such an approach by bringing the world community together at the quadrennial [Global Refugee Forum](#). 168 governments attended the December 2023 Forum, which produced more than 1,700 pledges, including [47 multi-stakeholder pledges](#). The lives and welfare of refugees and asylum-seekers can be hugely improved if they are included in the public services and systems of the country hosting them, and if they have the chance to participate in the local community and contribute to the economy.

Several refugee-hosting countries are already implementing such policies – from Europe in response to the Ukraine crisis, to Latin America in response to the Venezuela crisis, or Türkiye's hosting of Syrian refugees. Inclusion can dramatically **reduce the costs of assistance**. World Bank [research](#) shows that in Chad, the cost of assisting 1.2 million Sudanese refugees would be \$543 million a year, although this amount drops to \$437 million since many existing Sudanese refugees already earn incomes. If all Sudanese refugees were fully integrated and given the right to work and move freely, the cost would shrink even further, to \$89 million.

To continue finding comprehensive solutions for forcibly displaced and stateless people, UNHCR engaged with a range of development actors. In more than 130 countries, UNHCR contributed to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework to pursue the inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people in development programming.

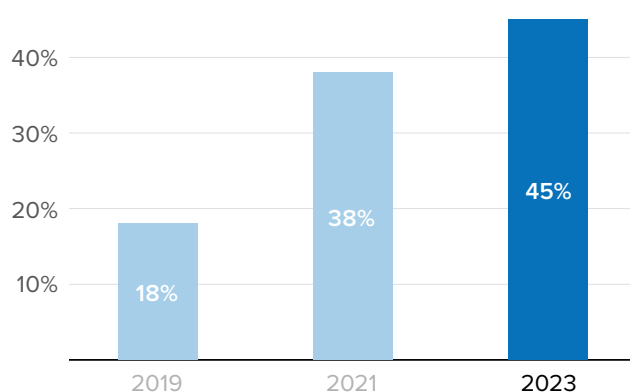
As seen in the other Impact Area chapters, efforts continued to include refugees and asylum-seekers in society. For example, monitoring by UNHCR operations in 81 countries showed that 5.8 million refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from government [social protection programmes](#) in 2023.

Similarly, refugee inclusion in national **education and health** services signalled some progress towards this end. Enrolling refugee children in national education systems is “cheaper, more sustainable, and more conducive to reducing tensions between refugees and host communities” than building parallel schooling systems, according to the [World Bank](#), which has [observed](#) a trend toward inclusive education.

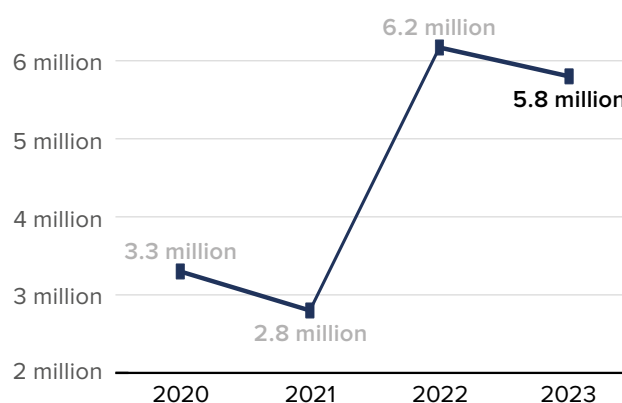
In June 2023, governments adopted the [Rabat Declaration](#), a groundbreaking agreement to promote the inclusion of refugees and migrants in national health systems, as part of the global movement for universal health coverage.

Moreover, the 2023 edition of the World Bank’s World Development Report, “[Migrants, refugees and societies](#)”, argued that refugees can bring benefits when their skills have a strong match with the **labour needs of the host economy**. Where the skills match is weaker, supporting their access to work, their mobility and their inclusion in national health and education systems is the best way to protect them, and increases their ability to contribute economically. UNHCR’s 2023 “[Global survey on livelihoods and economic inclusion](#)” shows that while 67% of refugees had a legal right to formal employment, including wage earning jobs and self-employment, only 45% of refugees had unrestricted access in practice, but that proportion has grown significantly in recent years.

Proportion of refugees with unrestricted access in practice to formal employment | 2019-2023



Number of refugees and asylum-seekers benefiting from government social protection programmes | 2020-2023



The social protection indicator relies on official national data, which are often unavailable or not disaggregated by legal status. Also, this indicator does not mean full inclusion in the national social protection system, as refugees’ access might be restricted to one or more specific programs or subject to a designated period of residence in a particular location. Despite having access to social protection programs, refugees may face additional challenges.



Focus Area

In Guayaquil, Ecuador, Desiree Núñez teaches her neighbour Maigualida how to use the new community-led internet service in the area, which is supported by UNHCR. "This is very exciting... I didn't know how to use email or even how to open an account. Spreadsheets were unimaginable for me," said Desiree. "I can now manage my accounts, keep my financial records and write to neighbours who live further away to offer my arepas and empanadas." © UNHCR/Santiago Arcos Veintimilla

Accountability to Affected People

To strengthen UNHCR's organization-wide commitment to Accountability to Affected People (AAP) in 2023, it implemented activities across the four pillars outlined in its [five-year AAP plan](#):

- operational and regional support;
- capacity-building and tools;
- research and advocacy;
- protection leadership and coordination.

540 UNHCR and partner staff took part in training to learn how to put the plan into operation.

UNHCR conducted regional and country-level assessments on AAP to inform the prioritization and allocation of resources, in order to ensure that decision-making on UNHCR programming is influenced by forcibly displaced and stateless people.

In **Southern Africa**, UNHCR conducted a regional self-assessment to measure progress in advancing in AAP and inform strategic planning. 27 UNHCR and partner staff in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (DRC) participated in a workshop to reflect on the findings of the AAP self-assessment. As a result, more resources were put into strengthening feedback and response mechanisms in the DRC.

UNHCR took major steps to ensure forcibly displaced people had access to safe two-way **communication channels**, to raise their concerns and inform programming.

Out of 132 UNHCR country operations collecting this data in 2023, 67% reported that they had multi-channel feedback and response systems that were designed based on consultations with displaced and stateless people. This was a slight reduction from 69% in 2022, a decline ascribed to improved regional analysis, based on the coverage and quality of available mechanisms.

In **Asia and the Pacific**, a comprehensive mapping survey across 20 countries assessed existing feedback and response mechanisms, focusing on data analysis and management. To address identified challenges of data management at regional level, UNHCR established a harmonized feedback and response system in **Afghanistan**, the **Islamic Republic of Iran and Bangladesh**. A regional analysis of feedback and response mechanisms was also conducted across nine country operations in **Southern Africa**.

UNHCR strengthened contact centres in several regions. In Europe, the **Regional Contact Centre** for the **Ukraine response** launched in December 2022 was operational in **Hungary and Poland**, responding to nearly 300 calls per day. In addition to providing information and identifying and referring people in need of protection, the contact centre also served as a safe and voluntary reporting channel for cases related to fraud, sexual exploitation, and abuse allegations.

UNHCR's contact centres in **Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Libya** responded to 1 million queries, covering feedback, cash assistance, registration, resettlement, health, and legal protection needs. This included 62,000 calls from Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers arriving in neighbouring countries after the start of the crisis and in critical need of information on rights, procedures, entitlements, and services.

In line with UNHCR's [digital transformation strategy](#), UNHCR scaled up the roll-out of digital tools, enhancing efforts to make information more accessible and user-friendly to displaced communities and to allow individuals to determine the best way to communicate and provide feedback to UNHCR, including during emergencies.

UNHCR's multilingual [Help sites](#) played a central role in providing people with information and making them aware of available services. In 2023, **31 countries** across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe launched their Help sites, including **Sudan** at the start of the crisis. By the end of the year, Help sites existed in **136 countries**, recording some **10 million visitors**, with at least **30,000 referrals** to services facilitated through these digital channels.

In 2023 **WhatsApp** messaging was promoted through 16 pilot WhatsApp Turn.io chatbots for refugees and asylum-seekers. This system was used by 75,000 people, with almost 145,000 all-time users since its introduction.

In **the Americas**, UNHCR established a social media platform in Spanish, responding to direct messages and engaging in trends analysis, updating messages, and guiding operations. More than **1,400 messages** were addressed, largely requests for information or humanitarian assistance. **45 sensitive protection cases** were identified and referred for protection case management services.

In collaboration with [Meta](#) and as part of the Ukraine refugee response, UNHCR launched two rounds of **Facebook ad campaigns, reaching 5.2 million viewers**. The campaigns were tailored towards families and women travelling alone or with children, on protection risks while on the move, including those connected to trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse, and misinformation.

In **Asia and the Pacific**, UNHCR conducted an analysis of practices on disability-inclusive AAP, informing the development of tools and guidance for enhancing disability inclusion. Additional research was conducted to explore the potential and risks of using digital tools to support mental health and psychosocial support services for forcibly displaced adolescents. The [research](#) emphasised the need to co-design interventions with displaced youth and made recommendations to address existing barriers and challenges.

In 2023, UNHCR leveraged the [Digital Innovation Fund](#) and the [Environment and Climate Action Fund](#) to promote community-led solutions to misinformation and harmful content. In **Hungary**, where Ukrainians and other refugees encountered risks when they sought information on employment and services through digital channels, UNHCR facilitated a community-based system for identifying and reporting harmful content online, informed by community consultations and a roundtable discussion.

In Jakarta, **Indonesia**, UNHCR piloted a community-led approach to co-create and deliver [digital literacy training](#) to refugees from different backgrounds, in partnership with five refugee-led organizations.

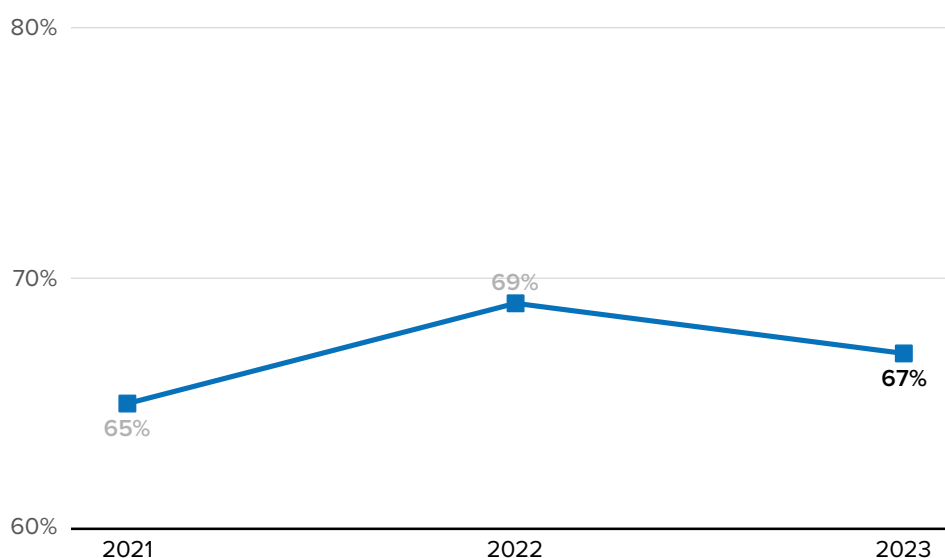
UNHCR engaged in inter-agency coordination fora on AAP, co-leading two workstreams under the [IASC Task Force devoted to AAP](#), respectively on the development of **guidance for collective feedback** and developing a training package and standing operating procedures on **AAP coordination in emergencies**. In collaboration with UNICEF, [CDAC Network](#) and the [German Centre for Peace Operations](#), UNHCR supported a global training course on AAP in emergencies with participants from UN agencies and standby partners.

UNHCR collaborated with the [Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Studies](#) and other IASC Task Force members to deliver a 12-week [AAP certificate course](#) for practitioners. UNHCR also shared its experience and lessons learned on AAP with ILO, contributing to the development of an ILO internal online learning journey on compliance and accountability.

The year marked significant progress towards an organization-wide improvement of several aspects of AAP, in line with the core actions of UNHCR's "[Age, gender and diversity policy](#)". This included improving organizational indicators to measure AAP, particularly by refining methodologies to measure access to feedback and response mechanisms, from self-assessment to community-based surveys. The **evaluative evidence** on UNHCR's approach to AAP was the brought together in a [synthesis report](#).

More efforts are needed to demonstrate the impact of AAP investments more broadly on UNHCR programming. In addition, the sustained progress made in exploring new channels of communication and feedback, including digital ones, needs to be matched with adequate human resources necessary to respond to the more complex cases and instances raised by individuals and communities, and which require human action and support to "close the feedback loop".

Percentage of countries with a multi-channel feedback and response system designed based on consultations with displaced and stateless people





Constantin helps 82-year-old Marc, a fellow Burundian refugee, to go in and out of his shelter in Mahama camp in Rwanda. Constantin volunteers as part of a community care scheme run by Prison Fellowship Rwanda and UNHCR, supporting older members of the community with basic daily tasks.

© UNHCR/Lilly Carlisle



Focus Area

A road protected by dikes cuts through floodwater that stretches all the way to the horizon, near Bentiu, South Sudan. South Sudan has now seen four years of historic flooding. Unity State, where Bentiu is located, has been hit by massive floods, with water overwhelming ancestral homes, farmlands, and the transhumance routes cattle herders have followed for thousands of years. Bentiu is now hosting 360,000 people who have fled due to flooding and who are now stuck, permanently displaced by climate change. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

Climate Action

By the end of 2023, **70% of refugees and asylum-seekers came from highly climate-vulnerable countries** that are also least ready to improve their resilience.

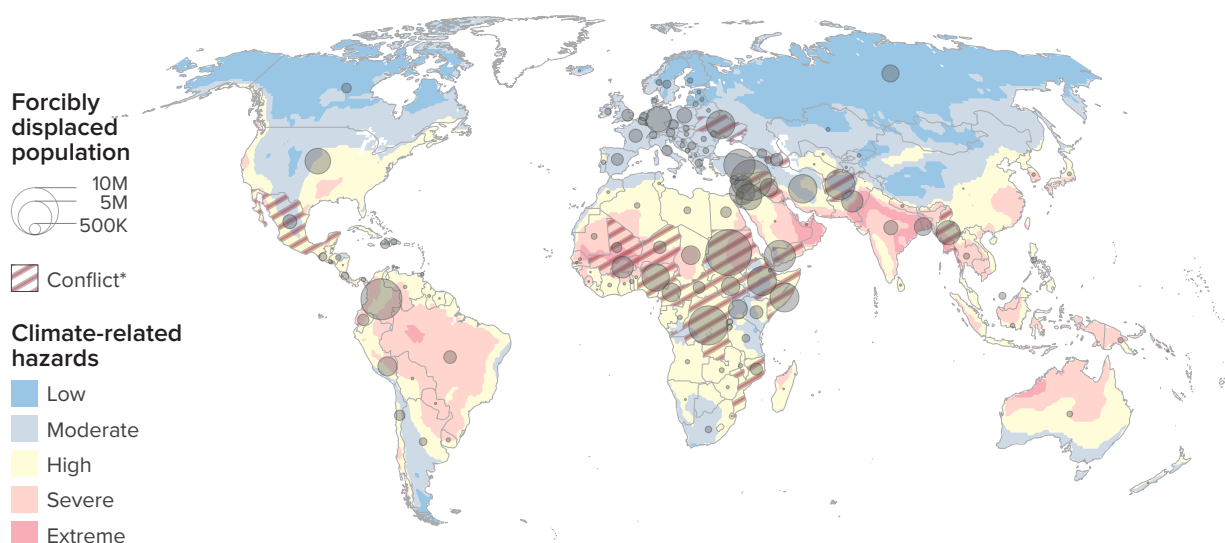
The data also reveals a troubling reality for countries that are host or home to displaced populations: for displaced people, the impacts of climate, conflict and fragility converge in a complex landscape of crisis. At the end of 2023, almost three quarters of forcibly displaced people were living in countries with high-to-extreme levels of exposure to climate-related hazards. Nearly half of all forcibly displaced people were living in countries where they remained exposed to conflict as well as these climate-related hazards.

Climate change, and its associated protection risks, also presented a barrier to people trying

to reach asylum and to people trying to end their displacement by integrating in their local area or returning to their home. In 2023, around 70% of people returning from conflict-related displacement returned to highly climate-vulnerable countries.

To ensure displaced people are protected, resilient, and able to find solutions despite the impact of climate change, UNHCR is ramping up its efforts on Climate Action. Building upon UNHCR's "Strategic Framework for Climate Action" from 2021, UNHCR developed its new "[Focus area strategic plan for climate action 2024-2030](#)" in 2023, which reinforces **UNHCR's role in climate action**, accelerating its global leadership in protection and its advocacy for the inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people in climate adaptation and resilience programmes.

Climate-related hazards, conflicts and displacement



*Countries with more than one conflict-related death per 100,000.

Data on climate hazards and countries affected by conflicts is from 2022 while numbers on forcibly displaced is from 2023.

Of the financial ask of \$845.1 million for activities contributing to climate action, over **\$30 million was mobilized** in 2023. In addition, over **\$60 million was raised in response to climate-related emergencies** such as floods, cyclones, and drought, with the vast majority going towards a response to **floods in Pakistan** in early 2023. Contributions in 2023 were significantly higher compared to 2022.

Strengthening climate adaptation and resilience in UNHCR's response

In 2023, UNHCR acted to make its **operational responses greener and climate-smarter**.

Following the completion of the satellite imagery-based analysis of climate-related risks for 30 settlements in 15 of the most climate-vulnerable countries, UNHCR undertook a costing exercise for mitigation measures. To reduce risks related to floods, drought and deforestation, \$860 million would be required across 25 refugee settlements accommodating 1 million people. The **targeted investments** would cover eight interventions to reduce climate vulnerability and improve community resilience, including: durable shelter, clean cooking, reforestation, flood and soil erosion mitigation, climate-smart water systems, solarization of boreholes and facilities, and infrastructure upgrades.

The **Refugee Environmental Protection (REP) Fund**, an innovative and sustainable financing mechanism to invest in **reforestation and clean cooking** in climate-vulnerable refugee-hosting communities worldwide, completed feasibility assessments in **Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda**. These confirmed the technical and economic viability of three sites in Rwanda and Uganda. A pilot target was set for nearly 14,000 hectares of reforestation, and 45,000 households served via clean cooking, for which initial upfront investments are estimated at \$25 million (\$15 million for reforestation and \$10 million for clean cooking). Realizing the projects' social and carbon benefits would be expected to draw in an additional \$150 million in carbon financing.

UNHCR uses innovative technologies (real-time monitoring and internet of things) to foster environmentally **sustainable water programmes**. Through more than 100 **smart water sensors** specifically installed in boreholes, four settlements have their groundwater sources monitored in three country operations – **Malawi, Nigeria and Uganda**.

In 2023, UNHCR also continued its **solarization** efforts, with nearly half of UNHCR-run facilities running with solar-powered systems (50% of water pumps and 44% of health care facilities).

An additional 38 water systems and 10 health care facilities were identified as feasible for solarization in **Mauritania, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan and Rwanda** through “**Project Flow**”, which uses an innovative financing mechanism to cover upfront capital costs while the fund is replenished through fuel savings.

While progress is tangible, many areas remain in need of further financial support, particularly in the upgrades of ageing water and sanitation infrastructures (some in use for decades), provision of settlement-level flood mitigation measures, and further provision of solar systems for communal facilities. Feasibility studies for Project Flow indicated that just upgrading ageing water infrastructure for 600,000 people in the five countries served by the project could cost \$4 million.

In 2023, UNHCR issued a new “**Policy on emergency preparedness and response**”, based on extensive consultations and lessons learned from recent emergencies. The new policy clarified the organization’s engagement in emergencies brought on or exacerbated by climate-related and other natural hazards, and emphasized the importance of taking strategic decisions on such engagement in the preparedness phase. These disaster-related provisions address the recommendations that

arose from the [evaluation of UNHCR’s response to the Cyclones Idai and Kenneth](#), and mark the first time that the organization’s emergency policy has provided guidance to its operations and regional bureaux on engaging in natural hazard and climate-related displacement.

Strengthening law and policy

At the 28th [United Nations Climate Change Conference](#) (COP28) UNHCR’s technical support, policy engagement and advocacy alongside refugees, IDPs, governments and multiple partners contributed to the inclusion of displacement in the first [Global Stocktake](#), which guides **stronger national commitments** and the recognition of displacement and displaced people in the scope of the new loss and damage fund. As the new board of the fund gets to work, ensuring the inclusion of displaced populations will be important to its delivery for frontline communities. UNHCR also contributed to the development of the “[COP28 Declaration on climate, relief, recovery and peace](#)”, and signed onto its call for scaled up action, finance and support to vulnerable and conflict-affected countries, with specific recognition of displaced and host communities.

© UNHCR/Reuben Lim Wende



Spotlight on emergency response

On 14 May, [Cyclone Mocha](#) made landfall in Myanmar’s Rakhine State. Around 10.2 million people in **Myanmar and Bangladesh** were residing in areas affected by the cyclone, including 930,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox’s Bazar. Refugee camps in Bangladesh were severely affected, with extensive damage to shelters, water and sanitation facilities, and infrastructure such as registration sites.

In [response](#), UNHCR and partners provided protection services and prioritized support to over 4,500 households with severely damaged shelters, and provided labour support to extremely vulnerable households. In Myanmar, UNHCR provided **emergency shelter supplies** and disseminated **protection and safety messaging**.

In fulfilment of its supervisory role over the implementation of the international refugee instruments and as per its protection mandate, UNHCR continued to provide **legal guidance** on application of existing instruments for the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of the adverse effects of climate change and disasters. To clarify the situations where international refugee law will be applicable and may give rise to international protection needs, a paper was issued on "[Climate change impacts and cross-border displacement: International refugee law and UNHCR's mandate](#)". This paper built on UNHCR's 2020 guidance on the topic and provided illustrative examples where international protection needs arise under the 1951 Convention, regional refugee law treaties and human rights law. UNHCR also submitted a [report on the human rights implications of climate change displacement](#) to the UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change.

Throughout 2023, UNHCR also conducted a research project to explain the **links between climate change impacts and the application of existing refugee instruments**, notably the wider OAU refugee definition and its criterion related to "events seriously disturbing public order". In 2023, an initial legal paper was published on "[Assessing serious disturbances to public order under the 1969 OAU Convention, including in the context of disasters, environmental degradation and the adverse effects of climate change](#)". This research aims to provide solid hands-on analysis in view of the development of legal guidance on the application of the OAU Convention for the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of the adverse effects of climate change and disasters.

During the Global Refugee Forum, UNHCR and the Platform on Disaster Displacement jointly issued a policy brief on "[Protection of persons displaced across borders in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change](#)", highlighting good practices to support the Global Compact on Refugees in the context of climate change.

In 2023, UNHCR continued to advocate and provide technical support for the development and adoption of **laws and policies** to advance prevention, protection and solutions for **internally displaced people** in the context of disaster and climate change, including in the **Philippines, Somalia, Nigeria and Cameroon**. A significant positive development was the adoption in **Chad** of a law on internal displacement domesticating the African Union's "[Convention for the protection and assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa](#)" (the "Kampala Convention") in May, strongly supported by UNHCR and its protection partners in recent years. UNHCR conducted a series of workshops at national and local level to raise awareness among different stakeholders about the newly adopted law, also advocating for the adoption of implementing regulations.

In **Malawi**, UNHCR and its protection partners supported the development of the "[Disaster risk management Act, 2023](#)", strengthening protection-sensitive provisions on issues such as relocation and protection of children and vulnerable adults in evacuation centres.

Building evidence and data

UNHCR supported the development of an "[IGAD climate adaptation strategy \(2023-2030\)](#)" under the leadership of the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Climate Adaptation and Environmental Protection (IGAD-CAEP), together with a consortium of world leading research institutes, to ensure the meaningful inclusion of displaced and stateless people in **adaptation planning and programming** from the start. The strategy established an innovative framework for accelerating regional collaboration and bolstering local communities and groups in particularly vulnerable situations, including displaced populations and their hosts.



Spotlight on preparedness



After experiencing **huge losses and displacement** from Hurricanes Eta and Iota in November 2020, including widespread flooding that destroyed and swept away houses, a community near San Pedro Sula in **Honduras** realized that the safety and security situation would only worsen as climate change made such events more frequent and extreme. They resolved to get organized and start working together to **prevent and respond to future disasters**.

UNHCR and Children International were already working with communities in San Pedro Sula to prevent displacement caused by violence. Following the hurricanes, both organizations began supporting communities near the city to work on action plans, should disaster strike again. Residents began by working closely with the local government and the Honduran Red Cross to form several committees made up of local volunteers, each one focused on a different aspect of preventing and responding to a disaster.

UNHCR supported IGAD-CAEP in developing an **integrated assessment of economic, social, cultural and environmental losses and damage** resulting from the adverse effects of climate change in **Somalia**. The assessment included extensive references to the specific vulnerabilities and needs of refugees and displaced people, informing policymakers, donors, community leaders and others about the need for dedicated resourcing, evidence-based decision-making and targeted interventions to avert, minimize and address displacement as a form of loss and damage. Building on the community of practice of 20 leading academic institutions working on strategic foresight and predictive analytics established for the **Sahel Predictive Analytics Project**, UNHCR began collaborating with CGIAR to better understand and utilize climate hazard data tailored to displacement contexts with the aim to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to current and future climate-related risks, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected areas. The resulting maps and evidence have informed internal capacity-building and guided our strategic planning and prioritization, including the development of the **“Focus Area Strategic Plan for Climate Action 2024-2030”** and **regional plans**.

Greening UNHCR

UNHCR is on track to **reduce its own direct environmental footprint and greenhouse gas emissions** by at least 30% by 2030, from a 2010 baseline, a revised target. In 2023, UNHCR achieved climate neutrality for 2022 through offsets for a fifth year running. The organization forged ahead with installing Green Boxes, which remotely monitor UNHCR offices’ **electricity use**. By the end of 2023, 97% of UNHCR’s offices had installed Green Boxes, up from 92% at the end of 2022. 95% of UNHCR’s offices also took part in the annual UN-wide “Greening the Blue” reporting survey, an increase on the already impressive 85% that took part the previous year.

In 2023 UNHCR’s progress towards emissions reduction achieved a number of milestones, including the establishment of five global commercial agreements for the provision of **solar services** and the completion of energy assessments in 75 offices across 20 of the largest operations. 14 offices have already entered into contracts for solarization. The solar projects supported to date by the **Green Financing Facility** are expected to save UNHCR an average of 20% on previous fuel-related energy costs and 50% in **CO₂ emissions** per year. UNHCR published an independent mid-term **evaluation** of the Green Financing Facility in 2023.



Global Refugee Forum pledge on climate action



Countries hosting refugees are providing a global social good, while the costs and responsibilities they shoulder grow heavier due to climate change. Urgent action is required to **improve access to climate action**, including capacity-building and financing, for hosting developing countries and communities in climate-vulnerable, fragile and conflict-affected settings and to

ensure that refugees and other forcibly displaced and stateless people living in these settings receive comparable support for climate action as nationals, through their inclusion in all relevant laws, policies, plans and programming. Against this background, the second [Global Refugee Forum](#), saw governments, NGOs and stakeholders coming together in a [multi-stakeholder pledge on climate action](#). This commitment aims to strengthen the protection, preparedness and resilience of forcibly displaced and stateless people and their host communities to climate impacts now and in the future.

UNHCR has rolled out a **UN-wide ride-sharing scheme** in 107 offices in 21 countries. A vehicle tracking system has been installed in 88% of UNHCR's fleet, allowing for the use of satellite data to calculate emissions.

UNHCR made significant progress in [optimizing its end-to-end supply chain](#) in 2023. It modified the product specifications for two additional high-emitting core relief items – solar lamps and kitchen sets – meticulously addressing their contents, manufacturing processes and packaging. The organization has already transitioned to sourcing blankets and sleeping mats exclusively made of **100% recycled plastic**. As stocks are replenished with greener items, UNHCR is well on its way to surpass the initial target of a 20% reduction in its carbon emissions from core relief items by 2025. Furthermore, in a collaborative effort alongside

humanitarian partners, UNHCR launched a call to action for a sustainable humanitarian supply chain at COP28, marking a significant milestone in our collective pursuit of greener solutions.

In general, **underfunding** for basic services exacerbated the vulnerability of refugee populations to the adverse impacts of climate change. Given an already strained financial situation, UNHCR's capacity to implement proactive measures to address the impacts of climate change on displaced populations has diminished. Without sufficient resources to build resilience and mitigate risks, refugees become more susceptible to renewed displacement, loss of livelihoods, food insecurity, and health-related issues heightened by climate-related hazards.



Postcode Lotteries save lives and cut emissions

The [Postcode Lotteries](#) in the Netherlands, Sweden and Germany maintained their valuable unrestricted contributions to UNHCR with a total of \$9 million donated to UNHCR last year. During the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, they also demonstrated their ongoing commitment and advocacy for refugees through their trust-based way of supporting charities. The Swedish Postcode Lottery also granted UNHCR a \$1.3 million project in the United Republic of Tanzania focusing on solarizing 14 health centres in refugee camps and host communities.

Another highlight was the attendance of UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Yusra Mardini at the German Postcode Lottery's annual charity gala, where she received €1 million in additional funding for the victims of the **earthquakes in the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye**.



Focus Area

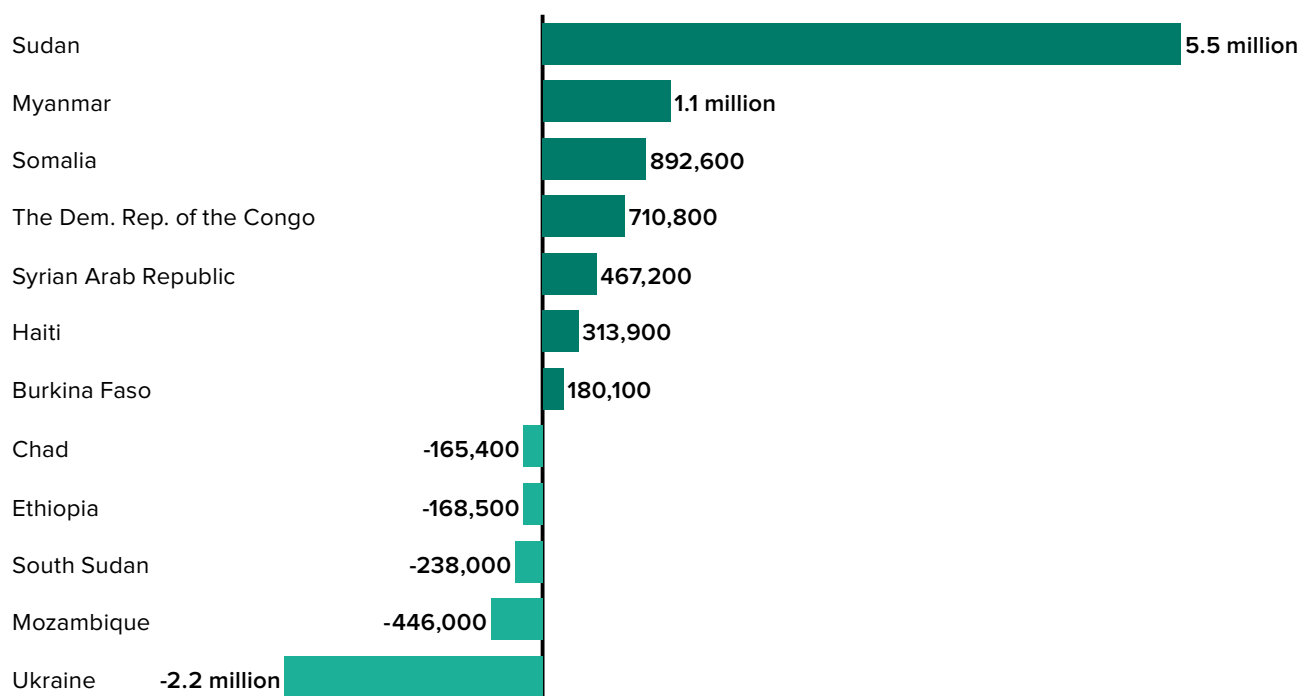
Tatiana and her children fled from their village of Kyselivka in southern Ukraine when Russian Federation armed forces arrived and occupied it for nine months. On her return, she found their home completely destroyed. Tatiana is rebuilding it with the help of UNHCR and its partner, The Tenth of April. They helped her repair the walls and the roof and provided a heater for the winter. "I received a stove with help from UNHCR and we are warm now." © UNHCR/ Nikola Ivanovski

Internal Displacement

Over the past two decades, internally displaced people (IDPs) have comprised the largest demographic among the world's forcibly displaced population. **63.3 million individuals** were displaced within their own countries as a consequence of conflicts and violence at the end of 2023, a 10% increase from 2022.

UNHCR was engaged in situations of internal displacement in some 30-plus countries during the year, working to safeguard the rights and guarantees to prevent arbitrary displacement, ensuring protection and assistance, and finding solutions. UNHCR combined this operational engagement with its cluster lead role in protection, camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), and shelter.

The biggest rises and falls in IDP populations in 2023



UNHCR continued to prioritize **cash-based interventions** as the preferred modality of assistance and a critical protection tool, including in emergencies. Overall, UNHCR disbursed **\$305 million** to over 2 million IDPs in 2023.

UNHCR co-led the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on the centrality of protection](#) together with [InterAction](#), and made efforts to ensure protection was prioritized and leadership accountability strengthened in humanitarian responses. 21 protection analysis updates in 18 countries were prepared by the UNHCR-led [Global Protection Cluster](#) and shared with affected States, UN Resident Coordinators and country teams, and IDPs themselves. Accountability to Affected People (AAP) and IDP participation remained a global priority. For example, UNHCR supported the involvement of young internally displaced people, alongside refugees and stateless people, from nine countries in the creation of the regional Youth in Mobility Network in **the Americas**, and the participation of IDPs and IDP returnees in the permanent constitution and election process in **South Sudan**.

Together with the [Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs](#), UNHCR co-led the [IDP Protection Expert Group \(IPEG\)](#), providing senior-level support to UN and government officials on protection challenges through country visits, including to Ukraine in 2023, and advocacy and communications, including [an online event for the 25th anniversary of the Guiding Principles](#).

UNHCR encouraged governments to adopt **IDP policies and laws** that would support protection, solutions, inclusion in national services, and socioeconomic opportunities. [Honduras](#) and [Chad](#) adopted IDP laws, and UNHCR supported awareness-raising and implementation in both countries, as well as in [Niger](#), which became Africa's first country with an IDP law in 2018. UNHCR also conducted technical support missions on law and policy in **Guatemala, Iraq and Mozambique**. UNHCR contributed to positive reforms in the legislative and policy framework in countries such as **Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mexico, Mozambique, Nigeria and Ukraine**.

In collaboration with the Special Rapporteur, IPEG and the [International Institute of Humanitarian Law](#), UNHCR organized a [cross-regional forum](#) on “Implementing laws and policies on internal displacement”, involving nine governments facing internal displacement, and supported a [peer-to-peer regional exchange](#) on national IDP responses for Latin American governments belonging to the [MIRPS Working Group](#) on Internal Displacement in Colombia.

The new “[Policy on emergency preparedness and response](#)” issued in 2023 strengthens UNHCR’s **response to emergencies** including situations of internal displacement. The policy is in line with the 2019 “[Policy on UNHCR’s engagement in situations of internal displacement](#)” and anchors the pursuit of durable solutions from the start of a crisis, through an emphasis on the primary responsibility of authorities and the critical role communities themselves play, among others.

UNHCR was immediately able to put the new Policy on emergency preparedness and response into action when conflict erupted in **Sudan** in April 2023, and it rapidly moved to shore up communities’ capacity and self-reliance.

UNHCR reached over 1.7 million people including IDPs, refugees and asylum-seekers and host community members with a multi-sector response. By the end of the year, there were **9.1 million Sudanese IDPs**, an increase of 5.5 million in 12 months. UNHCR **scaled up its operational response for IDPs**, exercised its leadership of clusters in the IASC framework, and reactivated the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster. As part of its efforts to strengthen community-based protection, UNHCR supported and partnered with an IDP-led organization for a project on economic empowerment of women and social cohesion. UNHCR supported 11,000 IDP households with cash assistance, and 220,000 IDPs with non-food items and shelter assistance.

The second largest increase in IDP numbers in 2023 was in **Myanmar**, where an escalation in the conflict triggered over 600,000 new internal displacements in a two-month period, and UNHCR advocated for meaningful humanitarian access. By the end of 2023, over 2.6 million people were internally displaced, a rise of 1.1 million from a year earlier. Of this figure, UNHCR was able to assist 567,000 IDPs. As part of the wider response in Myanmar, UNHCR delivered core relief items to more than 120,000 families, cash assistance to 14,000 families and shelter assistance to 45,700 families.

The **Syrian Arab Republic** also saw internal displacement rise. An increase of over 467,000, especially in areas most affected by major earthquakes in February 2023, left it with the world’s second largest internally displaced population, at over 7.2 million. Humanitarian needs were intensified by both the earthquakes and an escalation of conflict in some parts of Syria, while deteriorating economic conditions caused the further collapse of many basic services and shortages of basic commodities. UNHCR reached over 311,000 people with protection interventions in 2023, disbursed cash to 111,000 IDPs, and assisted more than 680,000 people with core relief items, including those affected by the earthquake.

In **Ukraine**, UNHCR expanded its support to community-based organizations, backing some 190 projects with small and mini-grants and promoting IDP councils as consultative and advisory boards at the local authorities, so that IDPs could participate in public affairs. Almost 3.7 million Ukrainians ended the year displaced within their own country, a reduction of 2.2 million since the end of 2022. UNHCR reached 2.63 million people with crucial protection and assistance, including protection information and counselling. Furthermore, some 900,000 individuals received cash assistance, with a priority given to life-saving humanitarian assistance, and 250,000 people were provided with emergency shelter, durable housing, and accommodation. UNHCR promoted a “durable solutions from the start” approach and supported area-based approaches to solutions.

Another country with a decline in its IDP population was **Mozambique**, which has faced large-scale internal displacement caused by armed conflict and weathered severe climate-related shocks. By the end of 2023, 583,000 people remained displaced internally, 446,000 fewer than a year earlier. UNHCR scaled up its partnerships with development actors to mobilize their support. Projects such as those funded by **GIZ** and the **African Development Bank** supported IDPs with access to energy and services, livelihood opportunities and documentation.

In **Afghanistan**, the humanitarian, socioeconomic and human rights situation remained volatile, aggravated by natural disasters and a large number of returns from neighbouring countries. 3.2 million Afghans remained internally displaced, with only 31,600 able to return to their areas of origin during the year, a fraction of the 1.5 million who have returned since 2021. UNHCR's area-based initiatives improved access to basic services and infrastructure in areas where IDPs and Afghan refugees have returned to, in concert with UNDP's work on economic recovery, social cohesion, and resilience building. UNHCR acted to protect and assist the affected population – strengthening their resilience, encouraging peaceful co-existence, providing legal assistance, and providing cash and in-kind assistance, as well as supporting community-based interventions. Some 220,000 IDPs and IDP returnees received cash assistance from UNHCR throughout 2023.

Colombia, at the centre of multiple and overlapping displacement, saw a small increase in its substantial IDP population, with 6.9 million IDPs affected by internal conflict at year-end. At national and local levels, UNHCR supported the Colombian institutional response by fostering a network of protection actors, applying an area-based approach, and prioritizing the legalization of informal settlements with high concentrations of IDPs. UNHCR and its partners made over 2 million direct and indirect interventions benefiting the displaced population, including IDPs.

In **Nigeria's Adamawa State**, an innovative **Government-led, UNHCR-supported, area-based pilot project** aimed to help people integrate or reintegrate into their area of residence and to prevent further displacement by ensuring access to permanent housing, tenure security, economic opportunities (through a partnership with FAO) and inclusion in Government services.

In **Iraq**, UNHCR worked closely with the Government to help thousands of people obtain **civil documentation**, key to accessing basic public services and mitigating protection risks such as restricted freedom of movement. UNHCR worked with the authorities to find dignified durable solutions for IDPs in camps, and successfully advocated for the assessment of all IDPs residing in camps to review their eligibility to be included in the **Social Safety Nets** of the Iraq Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. IDPs who meet the Ministry's vulnerability criteria now benefit from monthly cash payments that help them meet their basic needs.

In **Yemen**, UNHCR provided cash assistance to nearly 600,000 people, provided legal assistance, and supported more than 12,000 individuals to obtain identity documents. It also promoted livelihood activities and technical and vocational education, aiding displaced individuals to integrate and coexist peacefully with local communities. Through inter-agency coordination mechanisms, UNHCR advocated for and supported programmes on coordinated mine victim assistance, site planning, and housing, land, and property. Additionally, it supported community engagement efforts, resulting in an increased number of IDP women participating in community structures. Protection monitoring, socioeconomic assessments, and referrals reached more than 860,000 IDPs and host community members.

UNHCR implemented the **United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement** in 15 pilot countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas, and supported the work of the **Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement**, by seconding three staff to his Office and supporting the Office of the Resident Coordinator in Yemen

to advance the national solutions strategy there. UNHCR published its “[Institutional plan on solutions to internal displacement](#)”, reinforcing internal capacities, strategic partnerships, and initiatives in furtherance of IDP solutions.

UNHCR promoted the primary responsibility of States and helped bolster the solutions effort by supporting UN Resident Coordinators in promoting government-led and owned protection-oriented solutions strategies and/or co-led or chaired working groups on durable solutions at national and sub-national levels in countries such as **Central African Republic, Colombia, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mozambique, Chad, Nigeria, South Sudan and Ukraine**. In 2023, 5.1 million IDPs returned to their places of origin worldwide.

UNHCR continued efforts to strengthen **national statistical systems**, including working closely with the [Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service \(JIPS\)](#), the [Expert group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness statistics \(EGRIS\)](#) and regional bodies such as [ECLAC](#) in Latin America and [STATAFRIC](#) in East Africa. Specialized training programmes, such as the Collaborative Leadership Programme organized by JIPS, technical support missions like those in **Mexico, Azerbaijan and Somalia** co-organized by JIPS and UNHCR, and stronger collaboration with existing capacity-

building programmes on forced displacement, including with [Statistics Norway](#) and [Statistics Sweden](#), further facilitated coordinated efforts towards durable solutions for internal displacement.

To help national and local authorities achieve real change and bring solutions within reach, UNHCR collaborates across the UN system and beyond. UNHCR's “[Strategy on engaging with development actors](#)”, launched in 2023, works to deepen engagement with **development actors** in support of addressing displacement and laying the ground for solutions. [The World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement \(JDC\)](#) was instrumental in generating data and evidence for solutions by increasing the quality and quantity of socioeconomic data and analysis. The JDC supported **the CAR's** National Statistical Office to include IDPs in its [national survey](#) of living conditions, to ensure that data on IDPs was made available for development policy and planning. The survey formed the basis for a poverty assessment, which was published. Committed to strengthening collaboration across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus, UNHCR and UN partners supported IDPs, other forcibly displaced and host communities with financing from the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund in **Cameroon, Sudan and South Sudan**.



Evaluation of UNHCR's engagement in situation of internal displacement

Completed at the end of 2023, an independent [evaluation](#) of UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement proposed eight recommendations aimed at strengthening UNHCR's strategic positioning, leadership role, and operational approach in IDP settings. This included leveraging its comparative advantage and expertise in protection, establishing clear and equitable resource allocation practices, and prioritizing impactful interventions. It also emphasized the importance of defining UNHCR's role in durable solutions for IDPs and improving methods for tracking results and building staff capacity.

Additionally, the report called for better collaboration with governments, local organizations, and other stakeholders, alongside more effective resource mobilization strategies. The management response to the evaluation will be completed in 2024.

The Global Clusters

To help design proactive responses with coherence and complementarity between life-saving, development, and peace interventions, UNHCR and FAO co-led the development of the IASC [guidance note on “Advancing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach through IASC global clusters”](#).



The [Global Protection Cluster \(GPC\)](#), with UNHCR serving as the lead Agency, is network of protection partners and allies that coordinate for a strengthened response to protection risks across humanitarian crises, including situations of armed conflict and disaster. In 2023, the GPC focused on strengthening support to country-level Protection Clusters, which were activated in 31 crisis contexts. UNHCR leads or co-leads 29 of the 31, including in Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Sudan, with a focus on shared [protection analysis](#), collaborative protection advocacy and joined up protection response aimed at responding to the most severe protection risks. Following the [recommendations of a 2022 IASC Protection Policy Review](#), the cluster focused on optimization and coherence. The GPC's annual [Global Protection Forum](#) brought together over 2,100 participants from 143 countries. The GPC and UNHCR jointly published “[The centrality of protection in humanitarian action 2022](#)”, analysing the centrality of protection in crises where the humanitarian cluster system is activated.



The [Global Shelter Cluster \(GSC\)](#) reached 20 million people in need through more than 1,100 partners globally. UNHCR led 15 of the [31 active country clusters](#). The GSC supports country clusters for effective and impactful coordination, information management and advocacy. Key priorities included reducing the [environmental impact](#) of humanitarian shelter responses, localization, advancing [recovery](#) and [durable shelter solutions](#) and advocating for integrated approaches, which were also key themes for the GSC's [annual event](#). To improve evidence-based decision-making on shelter interventions, the GSC launched the [shelter severity classification system](#).



The [Camp Coordination and Camp Management \(CCCM\) Cluster](#) operates in 26 countries, with UNHCR leading or co-leading 18. The Cluster planned to reach 20 million individuals residing in IDP sites or various forms of informal collective accommodation in 2023. Prioritizing localization, CCCM collaborates with 161 national partners and facilitates multi-stakeholder consultations on localization in partnership with the Humanitarian Advisory Group. To bolster community involvement, CCCM ensures that its [Community Engagement Forum](#) efforts foster interaction with and within displaced communities, and it launched a [new network platform](#) among CCCM personnel and other humanitarian actors.

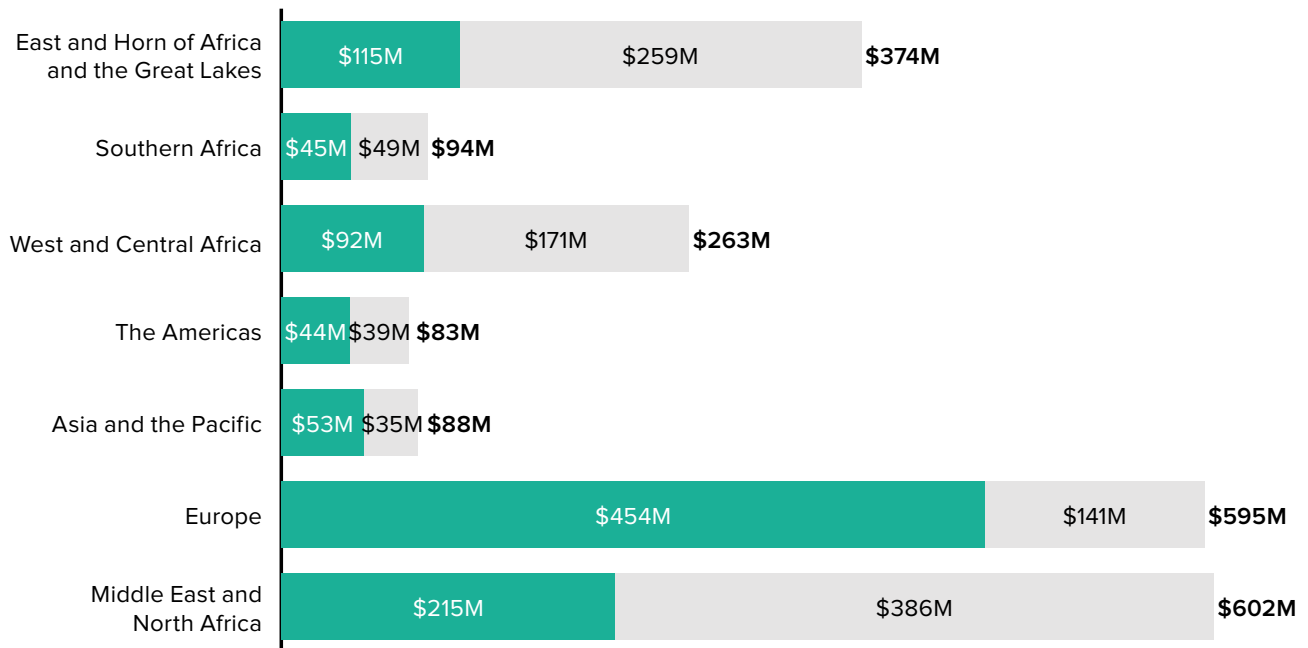
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget

\$1.019 billion spent against a budget of **\$2.099 billion**
\$1.081 billion of unmet needs or **51%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Internal displacement response

■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.



Soria is a Yemeni girl whose family live in an ad hoc shelter in Marib after being forced to flee their home. They look forward to moving into shelter with more comfortable and dignified conditions. © UNHCR/Gregory Doane



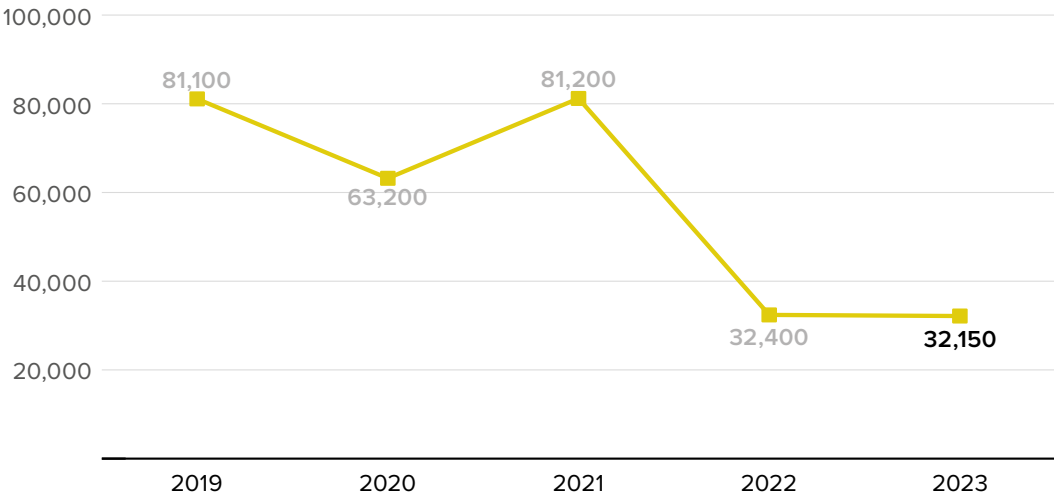
Focus Area

Natalya and her daughter Veronika are going through the process of being confirmed as citizens of Kazakhstan with help from UNHCR's partner, Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights. Natalya became stateless 20 years ago because she had not yet confirmed her citizenship of newly-independent Kazakhstan when her employer lost her Soviet-era passport, leaving her without identity documents and unable to register the birth of her daughter.

© UNHCR/Izturgan Aldauyev

Statelessness

Number of stateless persons who have acquired a nationality or had it confirmed | 2019-2023



In 2023, UNHCR launched the “[Strategic plan 2023-2026: redoubling efforts on statelessness](#)” with the aim of achieving transformative and measurable changes by 2026 in the reduction and prevention of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons. To this end, UNHCR intensified policy and public advocacy to encourage country-level actions and strategies, advocating for legislative reforms to grant nationality to stateless populations and prevent childhood statelessness. The Strategic Plan also envisages a multi-stakeholder approach by setting up a platform of actors committed to end statelessness, including stateless-led organizations. In this regard, the [Global Alliance to End Statelessness](#) will be launched in October 2024.

Numerous countries made advances in the fight against statelessness in 2023. **Kenya** [formally recognized the Pemba](#) as an ethnic community, resulting in approximately 7,000 people obtaining Kenyan identity documents. **Kazakhstan** confirmed citizenship to 1,622 stateless persons and **Uzbekistan** recognized 4,993 stateless persons as citizens. In 2023, the first phase of a joint project between **the Philippines** and **Indonesia** came to an end, facilitating the confirmation of nationality for 8,745 people of Indonesian descent in the Philippines. In the **United Republic of Tanzania**, more than 3,300 individuals at risk of statelessness from historical migrant communities were granted Tanzanian nationality. Since the beginning of the **#IBelong Campaign** to end statelessness in 2014, 550,000 people have acquired a nationality. In 2023, 32,150 individuals who were formerly stateless or of undetermined nationality were able to acquire or confirm their nationality. 2023 was the second year in a row when the number of cases of statelessness that have been resolved has shown a downward trend.

UNHCR operations advocated for strengthening legal and policy frameworks on statelessness and provided technical support and assistance. In 2023, 14 States improved their laws, policies and procedures to prevent and reduce statelessness, one short of UNHCR’s target of 15. Several countries, including the **Republic of Moldova**, **North Macedonia**, the **Kyrgyz Republic** and the **Bahamas**, introduced legal amendments to ensure that children are not born into statelessness

and do not inherit it from their parents. **Brazil’s** constitutional amendment prevented the loss of Brazilian nationality when acquiring another and safeguards against statelessness from renunciation. Following UNHCR’s advocacy, **Colombia** extended the “Children First” measure for two more years, which ensures that almost 100,000 children born in Colombia to Venezuelan parents receive recognition of Colombian nationality, mitigating the risk of statelessness for them.

There were also considerable achievements in the strengthening of protection frameworks for stateless persons in line with the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons.

The **United States** put into effect new policy guidance to assist stateless individuals, while **Portugal** approved legal amendments with a view to establishing a statelessness determination procedure. In **Georgia**, legal amendments were adopted to reduce the residence requirement from 10 to five years, facilitating naturalization for stateless persons in line with international standards.

In 2023, the [Republic of the Congo](#) became State party to both statelessness conventions. While two more accessions were expected, other countries – including **Sao Tome and Principe**, **South Sudan** and **Slovenia** – with support from UNHCR, took concrete steps towards becoming parties to one or both statelessness conventions, with respective accessions expected in 2024. In particular, Sao Tome and Principe approved accession to both conventions in 2023, and consequently deposited accession instruments in January 2024.

Significant achievements took place at the regional level, in particular in Africa. A [regional model law](#) on statelessness determination, the protection of stateless persons and naturalization was prepared with support by UNHCR and endorsed by the technical level experts of the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States. In addition, the finalized draft “Protocol to the African Charter on human and people’s rights relating to the specific aspects of the right to a nationality and the eradication of statelessness in Africa” was submitted for consideration to the African Union

Specialized Technical Committee on Migration and then to the Specialized Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, which adopted it at its ministerial segment, in December 2023. It was later [adopted](#) by the AU Assembly of States in 2024. Reports on the risks of statelessness in [West and Central Africa](#) and on the prevention of statelessness in the [Great Lakes region](#) were also published.

Public advocacy is one of the prioritized actions in the new Strategic Plan. In 2023, the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UN Women convened a [Global Summit on Gender Equality in Nationality Laws](#), calling for expedited action to end gender-based discrimination in nationality laws. UNHCR also supported States through advocacy for a universal [reform of nationality laws that discriminate against women](#), including through the #IBelong Campaign. As a result, at the event, representatives of **Eswatini, Iraq and Kiribati** reaffirmed their commitment to achieve gender equality in their nationality laws. Currently, there are still 24 countries where women cannot confer their nationality to their children on an equal basis with men.

The 2023 **Global Refugee Forum** saw 135 new pledges on statelessness. There has also been progress or full achievement reported on 48% of pledges submitted since the 2019 Forum. Among the new pledges, 11 UN country teams pledged to address statelessness, a result of country-level advocacy efforts. Stronger collaboration with UN country teams and Resident Coordinators is also a key action area in the Strategic Plan. More than 80 pledges were submitted through the [multi-stakeholder pledge on statelessness](#). This included 24 pledges by States and organizations to join the new **Global Alliance to End Statelessness**.

Ahead of its launch in October 2024, the [Global Alliance website](#) was developed, which provides information on how to join the Alliance. At the Global Refugee Forum (GRF), 24 States and stakeholders already pledged to become members of the Alliance. Notably, **the Philippines and Côte d'Ivoire** pledged to join the Solution Seekers Programme. Aligned with the Strategic Plan, UNHCR has also amplified the voices of those affected by statelessness and engaged them in advocacy against statelessness, including through their participation in both events.

Challenges to Achieving Outcomes

Despite increasing commitments to address statelessness, including at the Global Refugee Forum, and the commendable efforts by many countries, some of the larger statelessness situations remain unaddressed or progress is slow. Millions of stateless persons continue to be deprived of access to basic rights and services. In many cases, statelessness is the result of discrimination that denies certain groups their right to nationality. This also emphasizes the need to address statelessness as part of broader efforts to promote human rights, including through Sustainable Development Goals.

Lack of **accurate data** on statelessness continues to be a challenge. To address this, the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons, and Statelessness Statistics developed [International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics \(IROSS\)](#), which were adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in 2023. The IROSS provides a roadmap for the inclusion of statelessness in national censuses and other surveys and facilitates greater harmonization of this data regionally and globally. Finally, the decrease in UNHCR protection staff, especially in the field has affected UNHCR's overall capacity to address statelessness.

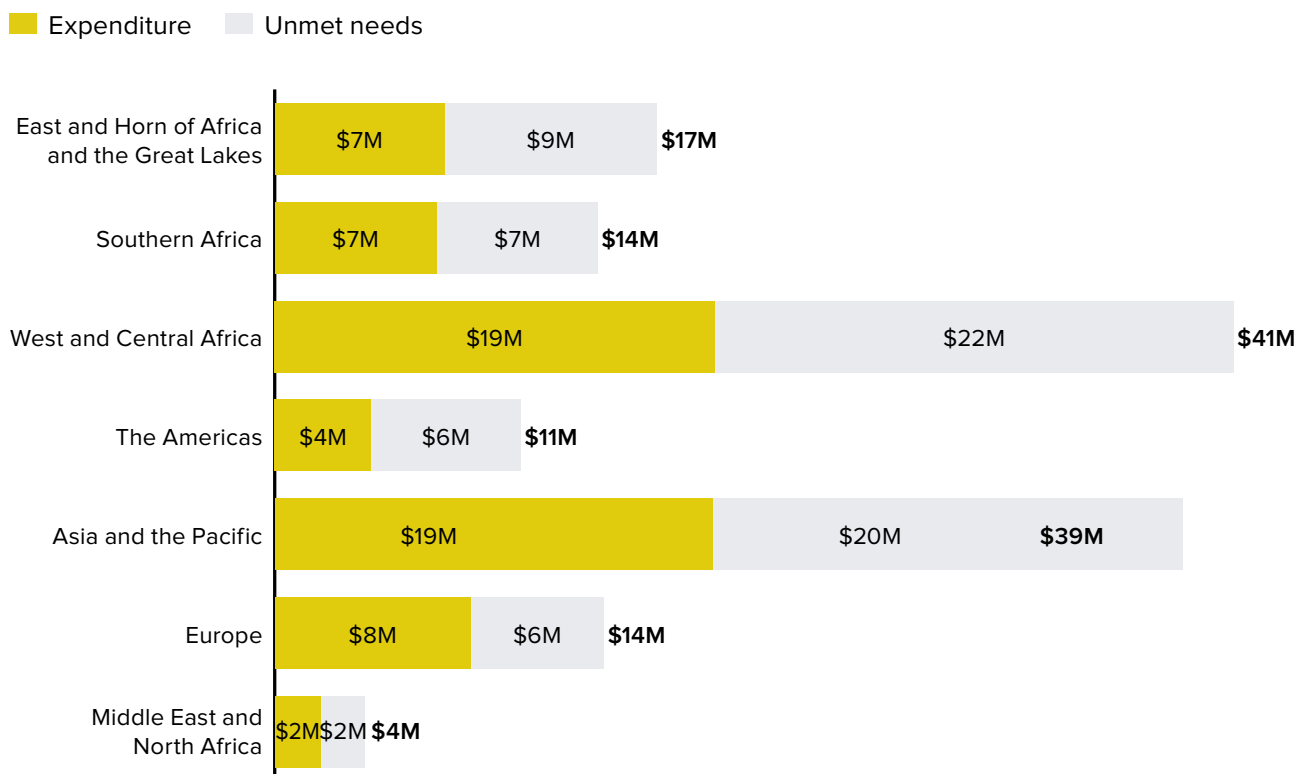
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget

\$67 million spent against a budget of **\$140 million**

\$73 million of unmet needs or **52%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Statelessness response



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.



Focus Area

World Bank Managing Director for Operations Anna Bjerde attends the inauguration of a school for refugee and host community children in Loumba Assonghor, Chad. She and High Commissioner Filippo Grandi visited the school, which was funded by the World Bank, during a mission to see firsthand the scale of the influx of refugees fleeing the Sudan crisis and to strengthen the response on the ground. © UNHCR/Bienvenu Daldigué

Working with development partners

Forced displacement and statelessness are not only humanitarian issues, but also medium- to long-term development challenges: both in how they impact host countries and in the potential for displaced and stateless people to contribute to economies and societies. At the end of 2023, 75% of refugees were hosted in low- and middle-income countries, and Least Developed Countries provided asylum to 21% of the total. The affirmation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in 2018 recognized that sustainable solutions to refugee situations cannot be achieved without multi-stakeholder cooperation in support of national governments. UNHCR is seeking to [change the way we think](#) and to increase the involvement of development actors in support of refugees: they can help to bring about shifts, including economic

and social changes, that benefit large numbers of forcibly displaced and stateless people in fundamental and far-reaching ways.

In 2023, UNHCR set out its "[Strategy on engaging development actors](#)", which incorporated findings from an **evaluation** of its work in humanitarian-development cooperation since 2021, "[How to stay the course](#)". The strategy focuses on deepening partnerships with development actors, tapping into their expertise and leveraging their financial and technical resources, for the benefit of affected populations and the countries hosting them.

It is underpinned by four core objectives:

- increased commitment to **protection and inclusion**;
- improved **equitable access to public services**;
- increased **economic activities and employment opportunities**; and
- increased **voluntary returns** of refugees and internally displaced people to areas where they can live self-sufficiently and in safety.

The 2023 Global Refugee Forum yielded several [multi-stakeholder pledges](#) with important new commitments towards these objectives. At the forefront was the “[Common position](#)” on addressing forced displacement with a **comprehensive approach beyond humanitarian assistance**, which was adopted by members of the OECD’s International Network on Conflict and Fragility, multilateral development banks, UN entities and others.

Another multi-stakeholder pledge, led by Japan and UNDP and backed by 72 partners, called for [more effective “nexus” approaches](#) – joined up humanitarian, development and peacebuilding initiatives – to resolve forced displacement. This was reinforced by a [multi-stakeholder pledge on peacebuilding and conflict prevention](#), supported by [32 partners including seven key countries of origin](#), who pledged to expand peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts to address root causes and create conducive conditions for safe and dignified return, and reintegration.

Bilateral development actors also started to take a more prominent role, raising displacement issues in their policy dialogues with national authorities, as demonstrated by the **German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)** and the **EU**. In addition, [Belgium](#) and the **Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** set new and specific targets

for expanded support, either committing to include forcibly displaced people more consistently in their development programming or by allocating a significant amount of funding within their fragility instrument to forced-displacement programming. The **Kingdom of the Netherlands** [committed](#) to support joint programming by development and humanitarian actors, pledging 800 million euros over 2024-2027, targeting refugees and host communities in eight countries across Africa and the Middle East.

BMZ commissioned a [review](#) of the extent to which its dedicated financing instrument – the Special Initiative “Displaced Persons and Host Countries” – promotes the **inclusion** of forcibly displaced people in national systems. UNHCR highlighted opportunities to promote such inclusion in the [Special Initiative’s programmes](#), which totalled 420 million euros in 2023.

UNHCR worked closely with **regional development banks**, including the African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) in 2023. **AfDB** increased its engagement in forced displacement in Africa, taking a [leading role](#) in the Core Group of the [Central African Republic Solutions Support Platform](#), and spotlighting forced displacement at the [Africa Resilience Forum](#), which generated a conversation on the **financing gap** among humanitarian, development and peace actors. A UNHCR project on entrepreneurship support to refugees and host communities in [South Sudan](#) received \$1.28 million in AfDB financing.

At the Global Refugee Forum, the **multilateral development banks** belonging to MDB Coordination Platform on Economic Migration and Forced Displacement [renewed their commitment](#) to expand their coordination and deepen their cooperation with all relevant stakeholders in the MDB community, with member countries and relevant specialized organizations, including UNHCR.

The **World Bank Group** increased the number of States supported through its dedicated financing instruments, with **Zambia** and **Armenia** respectively becoming eligible for the International Development Association's **Window for Host Communities and Refugees** (WHR) and the **Global Concessional Financing Facility** (GCFF).

With the Bank's focus on **fragility, conflict and violence**, the WHR has provided crucial support to millions of refugees in **17 eligible countries**, having funded **93 projects** (active and in the pipeline) that improve the lives of refugees and host communities. Across the IDA18, IDA19, and IDA20 cycles, the total investment has amounted to **\$4.27 billion**, underscoring the World Bank's commitment to building a brighter future for refugees and their host nations. Three countries (**Togo, Benin and the CAR**) are expected to attain eligibility in 2024. The Bank published the first ever **poverty assessment** for the CAR in 2023, setting out a "**Road map towards poverty reduction**".

The **Global Concessional Financing Facility** (GCFF) has also mobilized impressive support for middle-income countries hosting large refugee populations. With **\$853 million in grants** approved for active initiatives, the GCFF has unlocked **\$7 billion in concessional loans** from partner development banks and supporting donor countries. These funds have supported 32 projects across job creation, essential public services like health care and education, and sustainable infrastructure development in six GCFF refugee-hosting countries.

The **International Monetary Fund** (IMF) also increased its attention on forced displacement in 2023. In line with the **Managing Director's global policy agenda**, the IMF recognizes the macro-criticality of forced displacement, as reflected in recent IMF surveillance, programmes and analytics.

The IMF published papers on "**Macroeconomic shocks and conflict**" and "**Climate challenges in fragile and conflict-affected States**" and its "**Regional Economic Outlook**" also included a feature on the conflict in Sudan and refugees' spillover. These products have been catalytic in building evidence on the impact of forced displacement, which is helping to inform countries' inclusive policies.

The **World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC)** has helped to significantly increase the quality and quantity of socioeconomic **data and analysis** on forced displacement available to policymakers. In 2023, its portfolio grew by 10 additional projects, with 43 ongoing national activities across 35 countries and 19 global activities, all of them in response to operational needs and policy dialogue. There are now close to 800 socioeconomic datasets available on the **UNHCR Microdata Library**. At the Global Refugee Forum, the JDC co-led a multi-stakeholder pledge on "**Inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless persons in national statistical systems and surveys**", with around 100 pledges from host countries, donors and other stakeholders.

UNHCR and the World Bank Group's private sector arm, the **International Finance Corporation** (IFC), launched the **IFC-UNHCR Joint Initiative (JI)** in January 2023. Hosted in the IFC Istanbul office, the JI fosters market-based approaches by supporting the private sector to provide jobs, opportunities and services to refugees and their hosts. The JI aims to leverage the business sector to develop local economies in forced displacement contexts in a more sustainable way.

In September 2023, the IFC partnered with [Santander Bank Polska](#) in **Poland**, offering a \$17 million guarantee that would free up about \$100 million in capital for loans to forcibly displaced **Ukrainians** and companies hiring them. To promote similar [market opportunities for financial service providers](#), the JI designed a model of [financial inclusion](#) gap assessments and conducted such assessments in Africa, Europe and Latin America.

UNHCR also deepened its **UN partnerships** to support the inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people. As part of their [global collaboration](#), UNHCR and UNDP digitized their existing [appraisal tool](#) and rolled it out in three new countries – Iraq, Mozambique and Somalia. UNDP and UNHCR also finalised a “Joint roadmap on advancing access to justice in situations of forced displacement”, which guides both agencies on ways to further collaboration at the country, regional and global levels.

UNHCR and **ILO** also pool their expertise to support forcibly displaced people’s **access to the labour market**, decent work conditions and social protection. The partners agreed a new “[joint action plan 2023-2025](#)” and prepared to start the second phase of the [PROSPECTS](#) partnership, spearheaded and funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which will support efforts at bringing refugees into national systems in countries such as **Kenya**, which launched a major drive for [livelihoods and economic inclusion](#) in 2023.

Despite all this progress, **official development assistance** for developing nations [has come under pressure](#) due to States’ competing priorities and increased investments on energy and defence, in-country refugee costs and ongoing war. All this reduced the appetite for risk and the focus on displacement settings. It is vital that despite these challenges, resources and technical support continue to be afforded by development actors to support States to meaningfully include refugees, IDPs and stateless people in development agendas and programmes.

© UNHCR/Charity Nnamo



IKEA Foundation helps fund vital data on refugee situations

Since 2010, the IKEA Foundation and UNHCR have worked together to create sustainable solutions for refugees, internally displaced people, and host communities. The IKEA Foundation made a multi-year donation of \$1.2 million in 2021 to help fund the [Joint Data Center](#) on Forced Displacement over three years, 2021-2023. A partnership between UNHCR and the World Bank, the JDC supports data collection and analysis in over 30 countries across four continents, covering some of the world’s largest displacement crises.

Thanks to the IKEA Foundation and other supporters, more socioeconomic data on refugees, internally displaced and host populations is available to governments, development and humanitarian organizations, enabling them to make informed decisions about how best to meet the needs of forcibly displaced populations.



Outcome Area 1

Zamzam Ahmat Kouyouka fled from Sudan's conflict with her two daughters. "I saw my husband murdered; our home, our livelihoods—everything we had vanished in the blink of an eye." They made a harrowing and arduous journey to Chad, reuniting with 13 family members before continuing to the Djabal refugee camp, where UNHCR and its partners provided life-saving assistance. © UNHCR/Eugene Sibomana

Access to territory, registration and documentation

Results in 2023



Access to territory, registration, and documentation are essential for refugees and asylum-seekers to obtain international protection and access necessary assistance and services. Nevertheless, certain States endeavour to shift protection obligations onto others, thereby impeding the ability of individuals in transit to find refuge. Instances of reported arbitrary expulsion, violent pushbacks at sea or interceptions make it harder for people to find protection as they violate the principle of non-refoulement and often result in tragic loss of life and suffering.

Once asylum-seekers and refugees have been able to cross an internationally recognized border, **asylum registration and documentation are crucial** for them to have access to protection and services. While such registration is primarily the responsibility of States, UNHCR often plays

a significant operational role. In many countries, UNHCR either fully assumes this responsibility for States when they are unwilling or lack the capacity, or it works with State authorities to jointly carry out these functions. In others, UNHCR plays no role and States have assumed responsibility fully. UNHCR's ultimate goal is to support States to build their capacity to effectively implement asylum registration procedures, which it did in 2023 by providing capacity development support on all aspects of registration.

In 2023, 89% of all refugees and asylum-seekers were registered on individual basis in the 90 countries where UNHCR operations reported on this indicator. In 2023, **2.55 million individuals were newly registered** in UNHCR's PRIMES registration system in 138 countries, and by the end of the year there were 28.2 million people registered in UNHCR's PRIMES system, including 17.1 million "active/hold" cases and 11.1 million "inactive/closed".

As millions fled the fighting in **Sudan** in 2023, UNHCR undertook registration in extreme and adverse circumstances in **Chad**, in areas with poor logistics and connectivity, and counted almost half a million Sudanese arrivals by the end of the year. It also registered 200,000 people fleeing into **Egypt**. By managing to register people with a unique individual record, it ensured that they would be able to obtain protection and assistance and access available solutions.

In the Americas, UNHCR supported the “**Safe Mobility**” initiative. Operating in parallel with national asylum registration systems, this initiative offered an online portal to migrants and refugees in **Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala**, allowing them to pre-register for solutions and take a questionnaire that directed them to appropriate support from UNHCR or IOM. This initiative served to direct refugees and migrants to lawful pathways to the **United States** and **Canada**, enabling them to avoid the risks associated with onward movement, significantly reducing the reliance on perilous journeys often orchestrated by smugglers.

This online portal is precise, cost-effective, fast and far-reaching, allowing beneficiaries in remote locations to find solutions such as family reunification or resettlement. Thus it addresses both the immediate needs and the long-term challenges of global refugee movements.

UNHCR also initiated its “**Digital Gateway**”, which provides forcibly displaced individuals with remote access to services on one unified platform, the beginning of a shift from in-person services towards more digital services as part of UNHCR’s registration work. In its inaugural year, the initiative served 113,000 people surpassing the target of 75,000.

In 2023, the nationalities accounting for the largest numbers of **new registrations** were **Ukrainians, Sudanese, Venezuelans, South Sudanese, Somalis and Congolese**. These made up 68% of all new registrations during the year, and each had over 100,000 new registrations.

The six countries registering most people in 2023 were **Ukraine, Egypt, Chad, Uganda, Colombia and Kenya**, accounting for 52% of all new registrations during the year, and each country had over 100,000 new registrations.

While registration typically occurs when individuals cross international borders to seek protection, **documenting births and ensuring access to civil registration systems** for forcibly displaced and stateless persons is another crucial activity once they have reached their host country of asylum.

In 2023, an average of 65% of refugee children under five years old had their birth registered in 68 countries where UNHCR operations reported data, a decline from 73% in 2022. An increase was reported for internally displaced children: in the 14 countries reporting data in 2023, 63% of births for children under five were registered, compared to 46% in 10 countries with data in 2022.

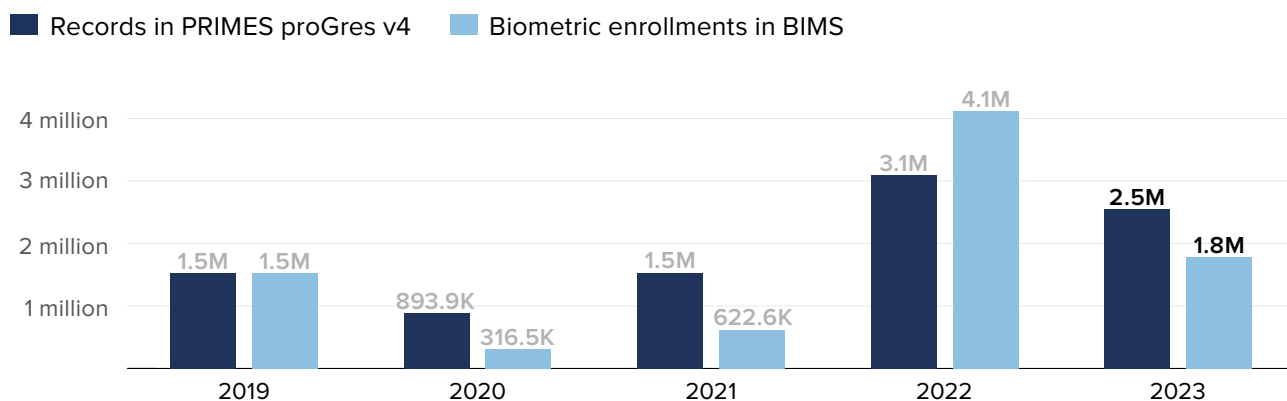
In **Pakistan**, following sustained advocacy by UNHCR, birth registration services for **Afghan** refugee children were successfully reinstated, resulting in 31,816 birth certificates being issued. UNHCR also supported **Ethiopia’s** Bureau of Women’s Affairs and Children to ensure the birth registration of 15,181 internally displaced children in 2023, taking the total to 65,892 over the past three years.

In 2023, the proportion of refugees and asylum-seekers with **legally recognized identity documents** was reported in 79 countries. In 62 of those countries, the large majority (75% and more) of refugees and asylum-seekers had obtained legally recognized identity documents, compared to 56 of the 78 countries reporting data in 2022. UNHCR supported the issuance of identity documents in a wide range of countries, from Afghanistan to Uganda, and in some locations it was fully responsible, giving millions of refugees a vital safeguard of their rights.

A slight increase was also reported for documentation among internally displaced people: in seven out of 12 countries reporting data, the large majority had legal identity documents, compared to four of the 11 countries reporting in 2022.

While data for stateless people remains difficult to obtain, data from 2023 estimates that more than 75% of stateless people possessed legally recognized documents or credentials in 7 out of 15 countries.

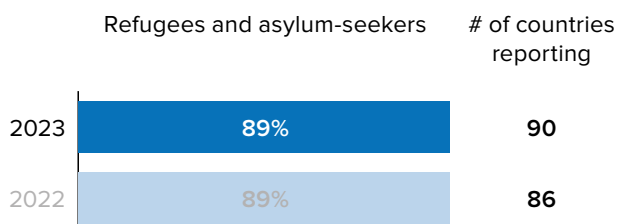
Individual registration per year | 2019-2023



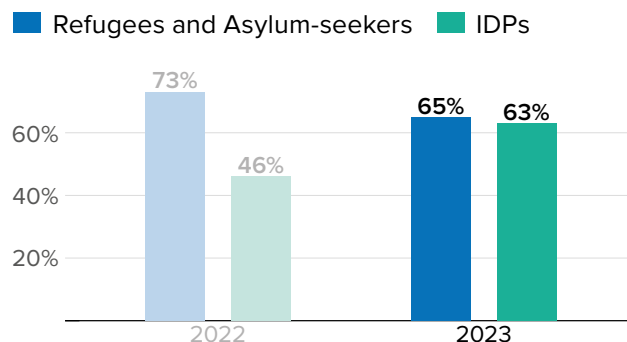
Core indicators



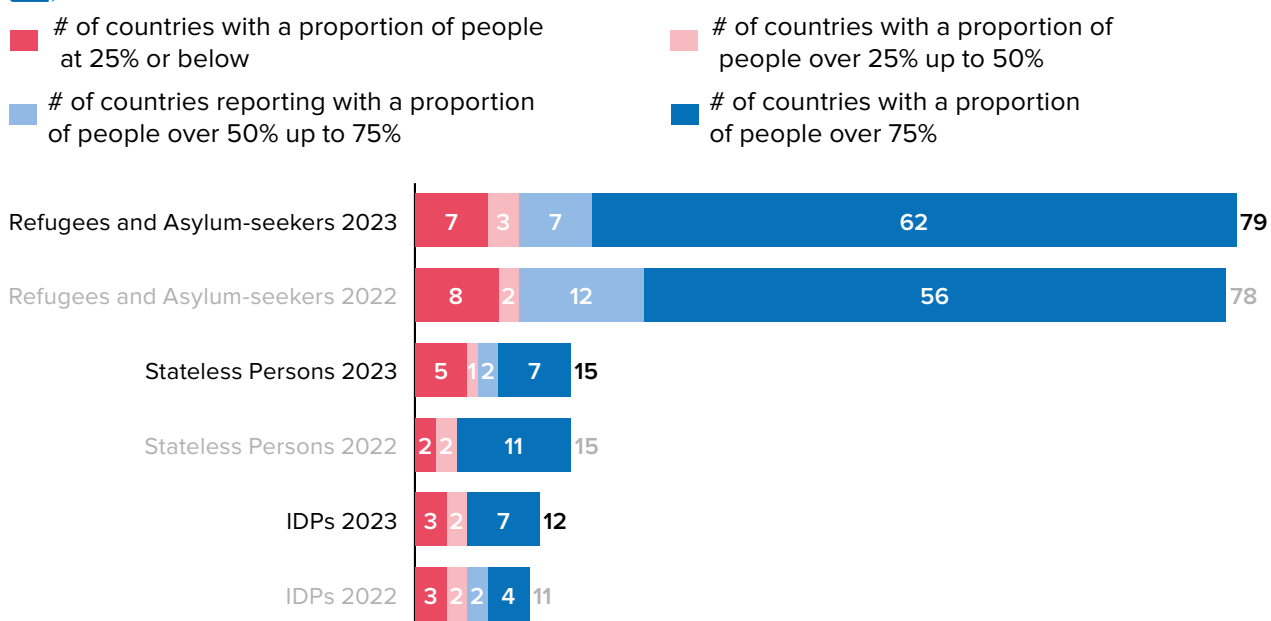
1.1 Proportion of refugees and asylum-seekers registered on an individual basis (%)



1.2 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority



1.3 Proportion of people with legally recognized identity documents or credentials



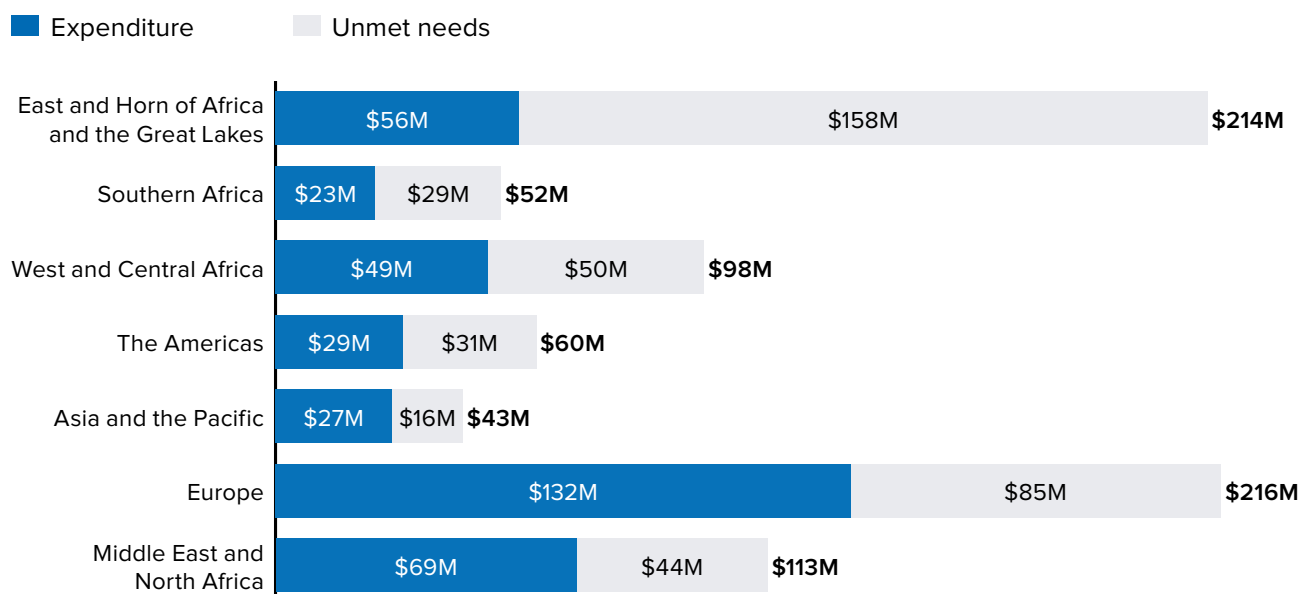
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Access to territory, registration and documentation

\$394 million spent against a budget of **\$805 million**

\$411 million of unmet needs or **51%** of the budget

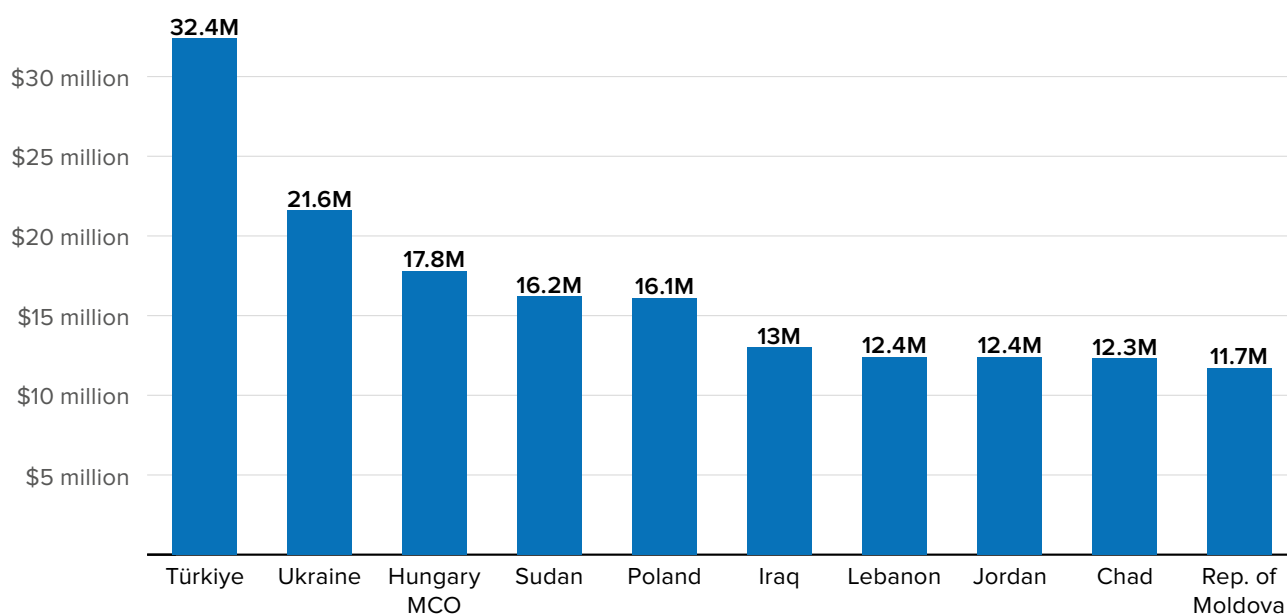
Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Access to territory, registration and documentation



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Access to territory, registration and documentation: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **42%** of **\$394 million** global expenditure in 2023.



MCO: Multi-country office



Haiset Hernandez and her husband Carlos Gomez fled from Honduras to Mexico with their children after they were threatened by drug traffickers who wanted their land. Some of their neighbours had refused and the traffickers punished them by murdering their children. After two days at an immigration detention centre, the family were referred to the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance and applied for asylum. © UNHCR/Nicolo Filippo Rosso

Status determination

Results in 2023

The number of people seeking asylum grew to unprecedented levels in 2023 with **3.6 million new individual applications**, with increasingly complex drivers of displacement. Systems for determining refugee status and other international protection needs were challenged. While the trend of increasing asylum applications was not new, the scale of the increase was larger than expected and even the most adaptable and well-resourced systems felt a strain. Systems in low and middle-income countries, which host the majority of the world's displaced people, were particularly impacted.

Experience has shown that speedy status determination and access to a secure legal status can quickly result in refugees attaining self-sufficiency and better longer term economic outcomes. Conversely, long wait times can mean longer reliance on humanitarian assistance and can also erode public confidence in the asylum system, as it can make it more difficult to return those not in need of international protection.

The increased numbers, coupled with capacity gaps, led to an **all-time high global backlog** of asylum applications pending decisions of 6.9 million. While large backlogs can often result in longer wait times for status determination, and all the associated

issues listed above, **the average processing time** – from registration of an asylum claim to first instance decision – actually slightly decreased from 2022. While, at over 400 days, this means that the average first instance decision still took over a year, the fact that this number remained stable demonstrates that the efforts of UNHCR and States have made progress in reinforcing asylum capacity.

Over the past several years, UNHCR has been consolidating a shift in terms of how it supports national asylum systems, ensuring that a more effective, sustainable, developmental approach is being used, in line with its strategy currently under development on asylum strengthening, which underwent consultations during 2023.

In 2023, UNHCR focused on **supporting States** and other stakeholders at country and regional levels in key areas that are fundamental components of a strong asylum system. This included creating adaptive legislative frameworks, strong institutions, capacitated and professional workforces, more effective use of different **case processing modalities** and increased availability of information about procedures and legal assistance. Several States enacted new laws or reformed their legislative frameworks, including **Côte d'Ivoire, Iraq and Somalia**; and many States used differentiated case processing modalities, including **Benin, Brazil, Canada, Chad, Mexico, South Sudan, Togo and Uganda**.

To help process asylum claims from nationals of particular countries, UNHCR also issues **country guidance** that decision-makers can refer to and use in their decisions. This can reduce the time taken to issue a decision. In 2023 it issued guidance on **Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Ukraine and Colombia**.

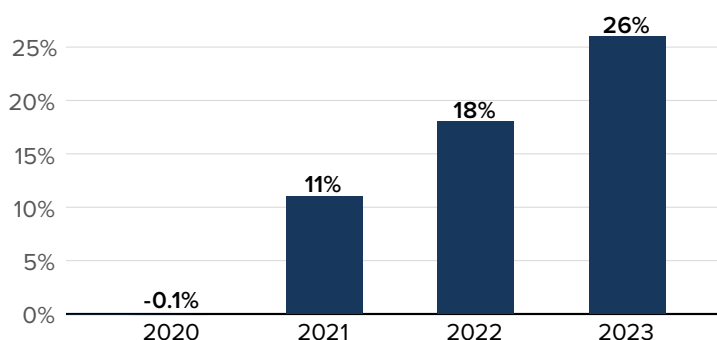
UNHCR also coordinates the **Asylum Capacity Support Group** (ACSG), which aims to match States' commitments to improve their asylum systems with corresponding offers of support from other States or stakeholders. In 2023, the ACSG set up an online **Dialogue Platform** as a virtual space and hosted

a technical event on best practices in the **fair and efficient processing of well-founded applications**. Examples of good practice were provided by Brazil, Canada, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Kingdom. In addition to the global ACSG framework, UNHCR supported many regional organizations and networks working on asylum capacity development. These included networks specifically devoted to refugee issues, including the **MIRPS Support Platform** and the **Quito Process** in the Americas. The ACSG saw increased engagement by the South African Development Community, the East African Community, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and the Economic Community of West Africa.

The results of these increased activities and engagement were seen in the commitments made by States from all regions of the world towards the asylum capacity **multi-stakeholder pledge** at the Global Refugee Forum. With over 50 pledges made, including 40 pledges by States to improve their asylum capacity or offer support to other countries, the outcome of the GRF in this area was a tangible example of global solidarity. With that being said, there still remains a gap between the need for asylum capacity support and offers for such support.

While UNHCR encourages States that currently do not have asylum systems to take steps to develop them, **UNHCR still conducts refugee status determination under its mandate in approximately 50 countries** in any given year in the absence of a fair and efficient national asylum system. UNHCR continued to work on improving the quality and efficiency of its procedures, and to develop good practice examples that could also be useful in State systems, including through the use of technology. One pressing issue facing many asylum systems globally is high turnover and burnout of staff, as a result of heavy workload and secondary trauma. UNHCR has placed additional attention on this area by developing training modules on well-being, and platforms that provide access to relevant tools and resources on the topic, including sharing of good practices across regions and operations.

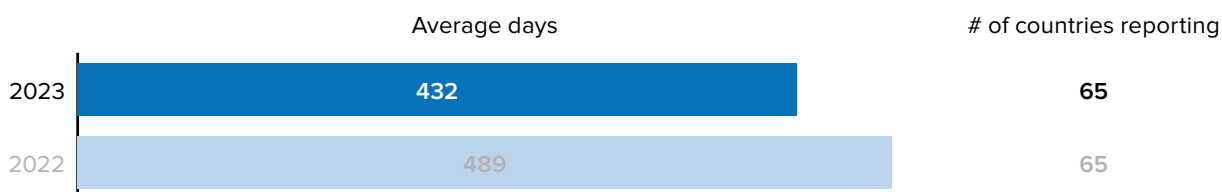
Growth of Asylum-seeker numbers (%) | 2020-2023



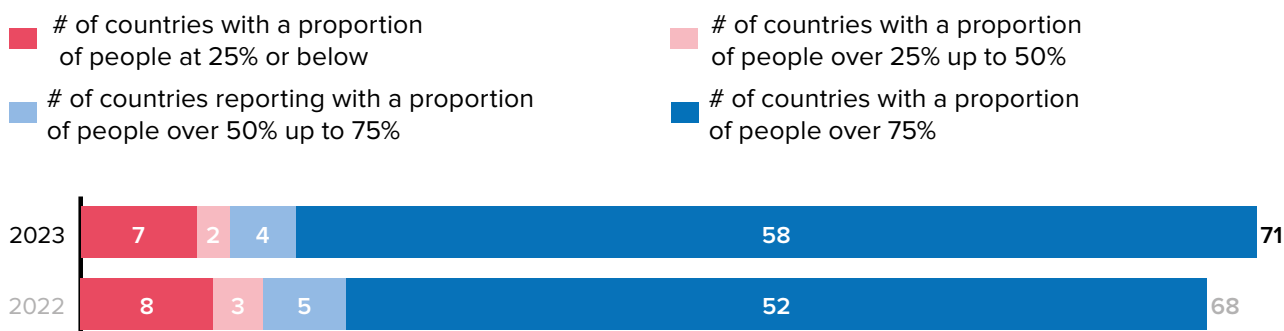
Core indicators



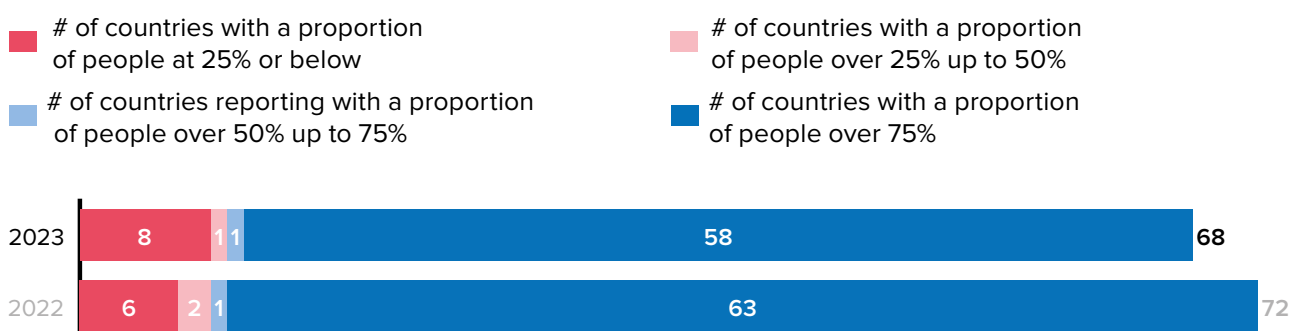
2.1 Average processing time (in days) from registration to first instance asylum decision



2.2 Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to legal representation



2.3 Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to an effective appeal mechanism after first instance rejection of their claim



Financial overview

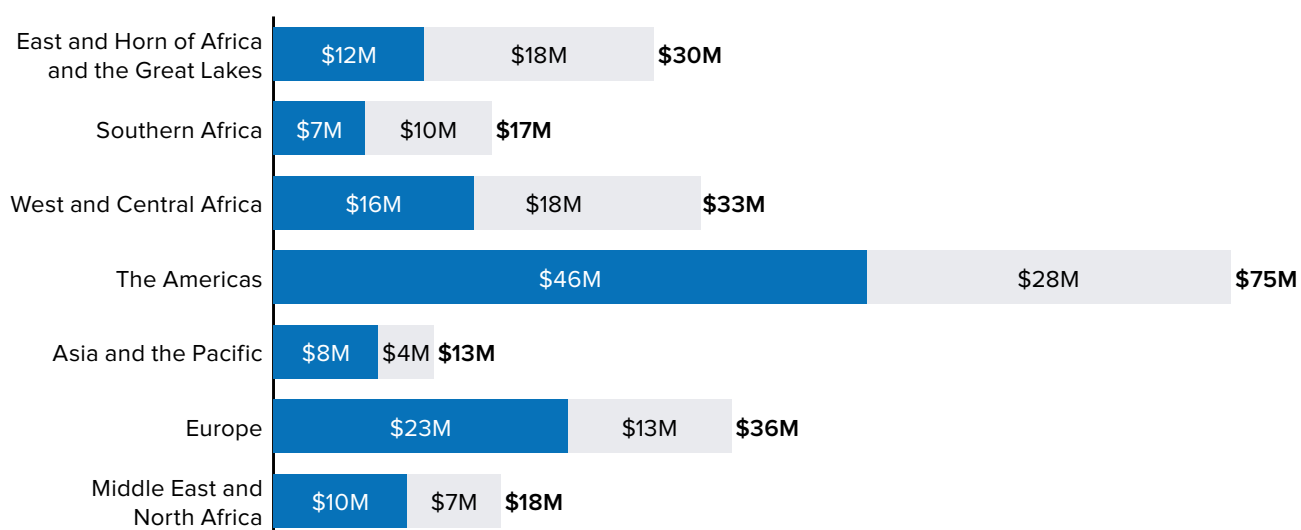
Global expenditure and budget for Status determination

\$124 million spent against a budget of **\$223 million**

\$99 million of unmet needs or **44%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Status determination

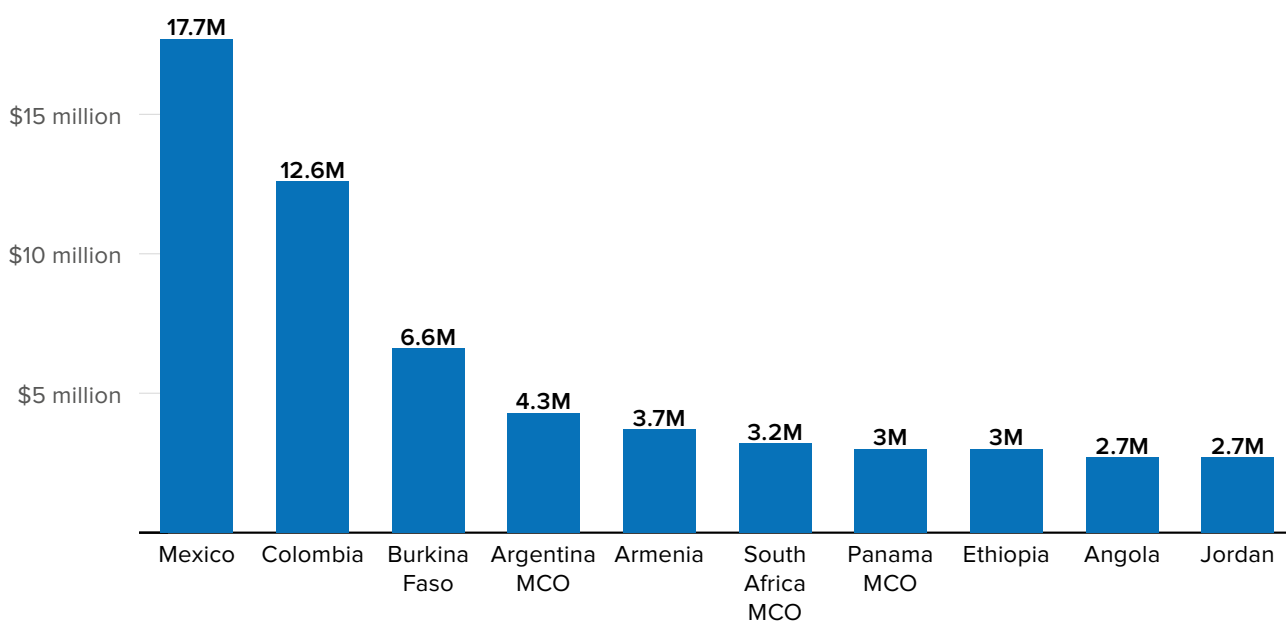
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Refugee status determination: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **48%** of **\$124 million** global expenditure in 2023.



MCO: Multi-country office



Outcome Area 3

Siuzan Ali Khaled, a Ukrainian lawyer at the international law firm Bird & Bird in Warsaw, Poland, volunteers with European Lawyers in Lesbos (ELIL), working pro bono with the charity to provide legal services to Ukrainian refugees for free. Siuzan says she is inspired by the response from her clients when she helps them, and by the smiles on their faces. © UNHCR/Anna Liminowicz

Protection policy and law

Results in 2023



The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol are the cornerstone of the global refugee regime, providing a solid foundation for international protection and durable solutions. At the end of 2023, **149 States were party to one or both**. There were no new accessions to either instrument during the year, but UNHCR continued to promote further accessions, including through the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) process.

In 2023, 84 UNHCR country operations reported on the extent to which national legal frameworks were aligned with the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol, and a slight progression was observed compared to 2022, when 64 operations reported such data. A broad alignment was reported in 39% of countries in 2023, with 31% making progress towards alignment. In 2022, by contrast, only 34% of countries were aligned and 25% were making progress.

Additionally, 48 African States were party to the 1969 “[OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa](#)” and 15 countries in the Americas have incorporated the broader refugee criteria under the 1984 “[Cartagena Declaration on refugees](#)” into their domestic laws. Both instruments are key regional complements to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol.

At least 154 countries and other territories have laws in place that relate to the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers. In 2023, the **Kyrgyz Republic** improved its law to grant refugees access to health care. Another positive example was **Chad**, which signed the implementing decree of its 2020 Asylum Law, a result of the country’s commitments made during the first Global Refugee Forum in 2019. At the 2023 Forum, many pledges related to law and policy reform were made, across multiple sectors. For example, 38 law and policy pledges were made relating to the [multi-stakeholder pledge on economic inclusion and social protection](#).

There were also 13 pledges submitted under a [multi-stakeholder pledge led by UNHCR](#), which called for States to accede to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol and to withdraw reservations and declarations, which can restrict the rights of refugees in practice. The pledges included a commitment by **Burkina Faso** to adopt a law on domestication of the [Kampala Convention](#) in 2024 and by the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** to introduce machine-readable travel documents for refugees.

UNHCR provided advice and support to States in drafting and amending national laws, to ensure consistency with international and regional legal standards. UNHCR engaged with the legislative processes of 103 countries and other territories. 53 countries and other territories adopted 92 laws or legislative changes, 49 of which represented advances in refugee rights.

In promoting international instruments for the protection of refugees and supervising their application, UNHCR launched an interactive [“Refugee treaty and legislation dashboard”](#) that provides information on the global legal protection environment for refugees and asylum-seekers, including data on refugee treaties and asylum laws around the world.

In assisting courts around the world in adjudicating asylum cases, in 2023 **UNHCR intervened as an amicus curiae in 17 cases in 11 jurisdictions**, including 12 before national courts in eight countries and five before regional courts involving five countries. Our interventions addressed a wide range of issues, including access to territory and asylum procedure, eligibility for recognition of refugee status, the externalization of international legal obligations, the right to family unity for refugees and the application of international refugee law to persons fleeing in the context of the impacts of climate change.

UNHCR advocated through the **UN human rights mechanisms**, delivering four statements during Human Rights Council sessions, contributing information for five Special Procedures’ annual reports and five country visits, preparing 25 Universal Periodic Review submissions, sharing 117 confidential written briefs with UN treaty bodies and participating in eight human rights-related inter-agency task teams. UNHCR, jointly with OHCHR, supported establishment of a [Platform of Independent Experts on Refugee Rights](#), bringing together UN and regional mechanisms. UNHCR strengthened its engagement with national human rights institutions (NHRIs), supporting a [multi-stakeholder pledge](#) from the Global Alliance of NHRIs and corresponding national-level pledges from NHRIs in **the Philippines** and the **Plurinational State of Bolivia**, among others.

The 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness are core instruments to prevent statelessness and protect and assist stateless persons. At the end of 2023, 97 States were party to the 1954 Convention and 79 to the 1961 Convention. This included the **Republic of the Congo**, which acceded to the two instruments in 2023.

Further, the African Union adopted a Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights Relating to the Specific Aspects of the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa, ensuring stateless people and those at risk of statelessness can exercise their right to a nationality and, in turn, have better access to other human rights as well.

Data on countries' alignment with the 1961 Conventions in 2023 suggested a greater degree of alignment than similar reporting showed in 2022. In 2023, UNHCR operations reported data for 70 countries, and more than one third had a national legal framework that was broadly aligned with the Convention. Another quarter of the countries were progressing towards alignment. In 2022, a smaller sample of 42 countries showed that only eight, or 19% of the total, were broadly aligned with the Convention, while 36% were making progress. However, the 2023 data found 27 countries that were not aligned to the Convention, up from 19 in 2022.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

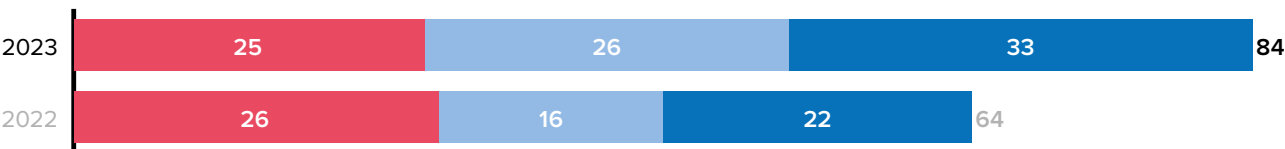
Unfortunately, multiple challenges remained. 69 States party to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol maintained reservations. Further, misinformation, disinformation and hate speech grew and racism, xenophobia and religious tensions went unaddressed or were even promoted. As public concern about refugee arrivals was fuelled by nationalistic, populist, and anti-refugee narratives, more restrictive laws and policies affecting international protection and solutions for refugees were introduced.

Core indicators



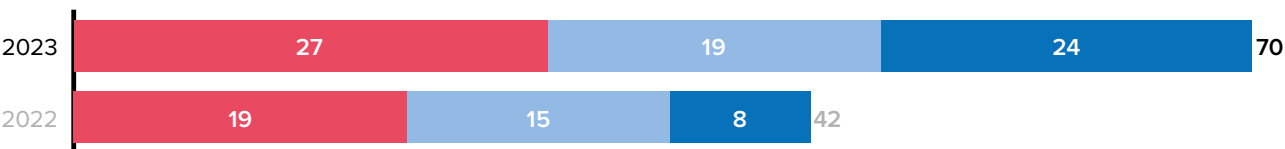
3.1 Extent national legal framework is in line with the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol

■ # of countries reported "Not yet aligned" ■ # of countries reported "Progressing towards alignment"
■ # of countries reported "Broadly aligned"



3.2 Extent national legal framework is in line with the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness

■ # of countries reported "Not yet aligned" ■ # of countries reported "Progressing towards alignment"
■ # of countries reported "Broadly aligned"



Financial overview

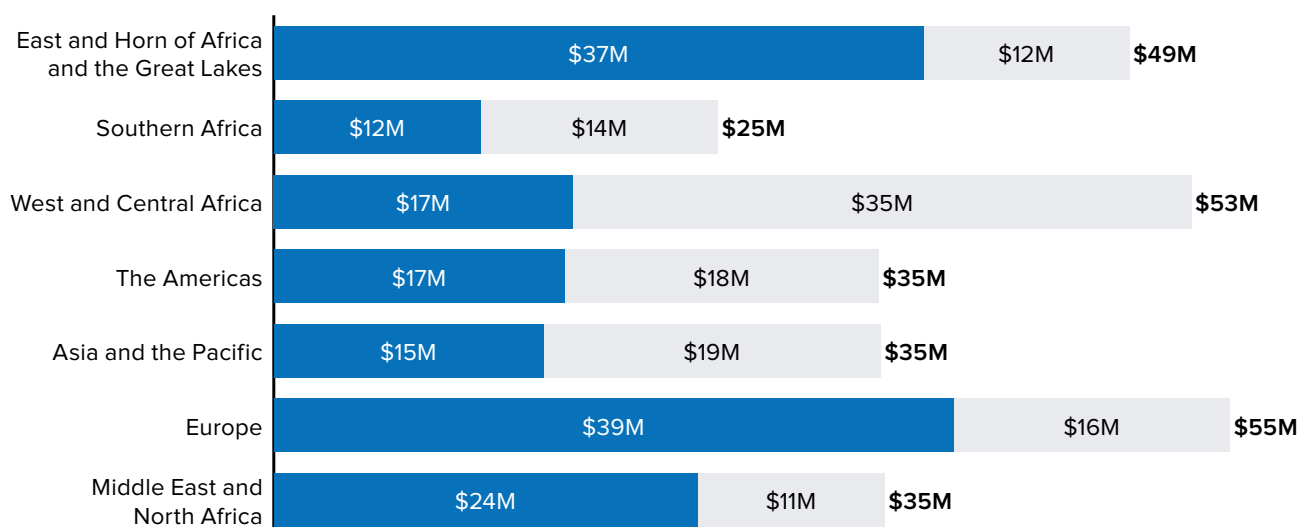
Global expenditure and budget for Protection policy and law

\$175 million spent against a budget of **\$301 million**

\$126 million of unmet needs or **42%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Protection policy and law

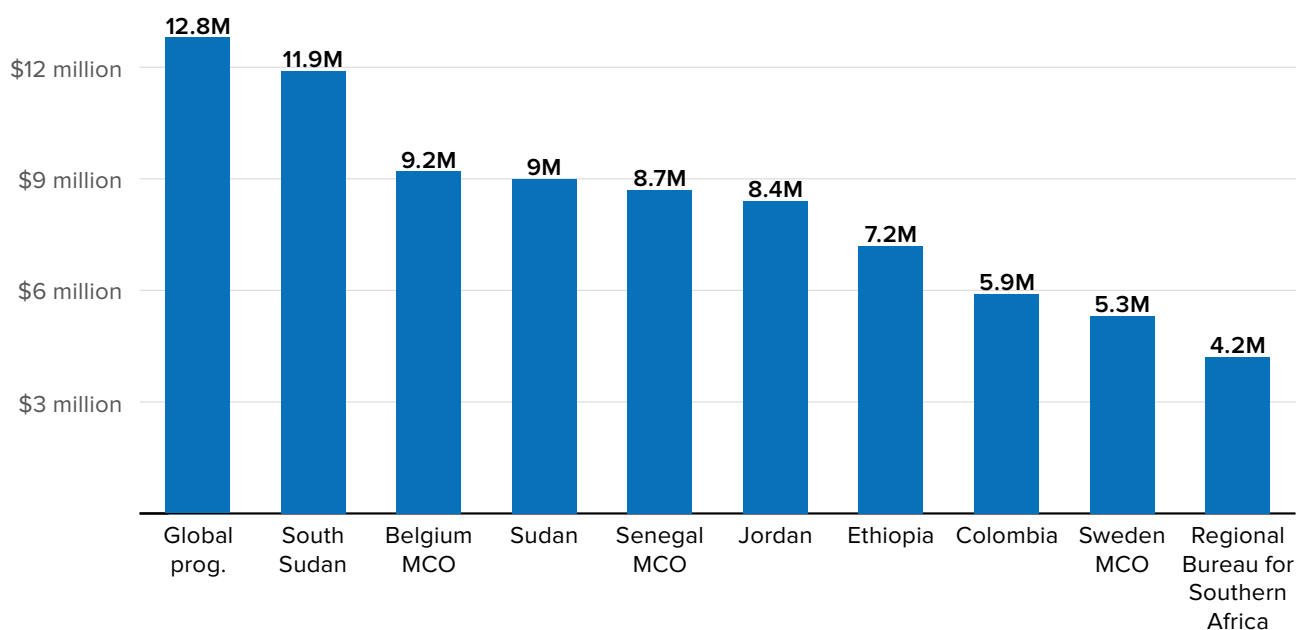
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Protection policy and law: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **47%** of **\$175 million** global expenditure in 2023.



MCO: Multi-country office | prog. = programmes



Outcome Area 4

Adhieu Achuil Dhieu, Director of Moniqadow, a refugee women-led organization implementing gender-based violence programmes in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, speaks at the opening plenary session of the 2023 Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. © UNHCR/Baz Ratner

Gender-based violence

Results in 2023



The risk of [gender-based violence increases in conflict and displacement](#), **a threat to over 60 million forcibly displaced and stateless women and girls.**

Conflict-related sexual violence made headlines in several emergencies in 2023 and can result in long-term traumatic impact on survivors. Other forms of gender-based violence (GBV), in particular intimate partner violence and sexual harassment, are prevalent worldwide and disproportionately threaten the safety of forcibly displaced women and girls long after they have fled conflict zones. Despite a decline in total contributions to UNHCR in 2023, many UNHCR operations prioritized life-saving gender-based violence prevention and response programmes, ensuring that survivors were not left behind.

At the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, the gender equality and GBV **multi-stakeholder pledges** together mobilized 166 pledges, a more than threefold increase in commitments from 50 pledges in 2019. These were the [multi-stakeholder pledge on gender equality and protection from GBV](#), co-led by Australia, Chile, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Action Network on Forced Displacement and women refugee-led organizations (117 pledges), [Avec Elles](#), led by France (35 pledges), and the multi-stakeholder pledge on [closing the digital gender gap](#) (14 pledges).

UNHCR is leading **inter-agency GBV coordination** in 45 refugee and mixed settings, thus enhancing the effectiveness of GBV response. All Refugee Response Plans in 2023 highlighted GBV risks and response alongside dedicated funding needs, a

major step to improve funding for GBV programmes. Data collected by UNHCR country operations in 2023 showed that 72% of countries (88 out of 122 reporting operations) had gender-based violence services available for survivors among forcibly displaced and stateless populations, roughly the same level as in recent years. UNHCR worked with over 200 GBV partners, including over 60 women-led organizations.

UNHCR's response to gender-based violence

included the establishment of safe spaces, where women and girls can access psychosocial support services and be referred to medical and legal support, and – where appropriate – cash assistance. 56% of refugees and asylum-seekers were aware of available gender-based violence services, according to data from 59 country operations. The decline from an estimated 66% in 2022, when the data was collected by 54 operations, demonstrates the need for continuous investment in outreach and innovative information dissemination solutions.

UNHCR provided 1,013 hours of **expert technical support** to enhance quality and confidentiality of GBV case management services and information management through **GBVIMS+** and ProGres, for example in **Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Ukraine and the United Republic of Tanzania**. At least 75% of refugee and asylum-seeking survivors of gender-based violence reported satisfaction with GBV case management services in 35 out of 47 countries where UNHCR operations reported such data. Countries demonstrating notable progress included **Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ecuador, Iraq, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic**.

Global partnerships contributed to develop UNHCR workforce's knowledge on **GBV prevention**, including on **Engaging Men in Accountable Practices (EMAP)** and Girl Shine with the International Rescue Committee, and on **SASA! Together with Raising Voices**. Evidence-based prevention programmes were implemented in 16 operations, contributing to preventing GBV against forcibly displaced women and girls from happening in the first place.

Using the **SASA! Together** model, almost 2,000 trained community activists reached around 240,000 community members over a four-year period in **Bangladesh, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda**. Thousands of adolescent girls were empowered through the Girl Shine approach in **Ethiopia, Kenya, Syria, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe**. In **Syria**, 1,029 **adolescent girls** and their **male and female caregivers** benefited from the Girl Shine programme, empowering adolescent girls to achieve their full potential. In **Iraq**, thanks to the EMAP programme, men displayed increased empathy and cooperation with women; they expressed a desire to break old habits and recognized the need to address violence against women and girls.

While levels of acceptance of violence against women remained largely unchanged from 2022, as change takes many years to achieve, UNHCR operations in over two thirds of countries hosting refugees reported that more than 75% of the population did not accept violence against women in 2023. Progress was noted in **Chad, the DRC, Ethiopia, Iraq and South Sudan**.

Deployment of GBV specialists in 2023 (18 in total) accelerated the establishment of quality **prevention and response services for survivors in emergencies** in countries such as **Chad, the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Moldova, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic**. In response to the **Sudan** emergency, UNHCR GBV prevention and response programming reached 291,285 people, primarily women and girls in **Sudan, Chad, South Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia and Central African Republic**. This included psychosocial support primarily through Women and Girls Safe Spaces, health and legal services, and safe accommodation options. In **Sudan**, 158 community-based protection networks operated across regions including Gedaref, Blue Nile, Wadi Halfa, and East Darfur, providing crucial basic psychological first aid to GBV survivors while playing a central role in awareness-raising within their communities. In **Central African Republic**, a Ma Mbi Si ("listen to me too" in Sango) centre was established in Korsi refugee camp for newly arrived Sudanese refugee women and girls, offering in-person and remote GBV services. In **South Sudan**, 22,395 refugee women and girls benefited from dignity kits.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

Conflict and insecurity exacerbated the risks of gender-based violence and hampered women and girls' access to GBV prevention and response services. Intersecting forms of characteristics compound risks of GBV, including for women with disabilities or LGBTIQ+ persons.

The impact of reduced humanitarian funding in 2023 meant that the urgent needs of a growing global population of forcibly displaced and stateless people were not fully met. Reductions in life-saving aid contributed to an increase in GBV risks, in particular sexual exploitation, sexual violence, child marriage and intimate partner violence. In Chad, for example, the lack of funding severely hampered humanitarian efforts to respond to the needs of Sudanese refugees. 33% of refugees surveyed said they did not feel safe from gender-based violence, especially when looking for firewood or fetching water.



Working with local women-led organizations (WLOs) to address gender-based violence

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), UNHCR worked with three women-led organizations, reaching over 85,412 persons people through their GBV prevention and response programmes, while 699 women at risk of GBV received business start-up grants.

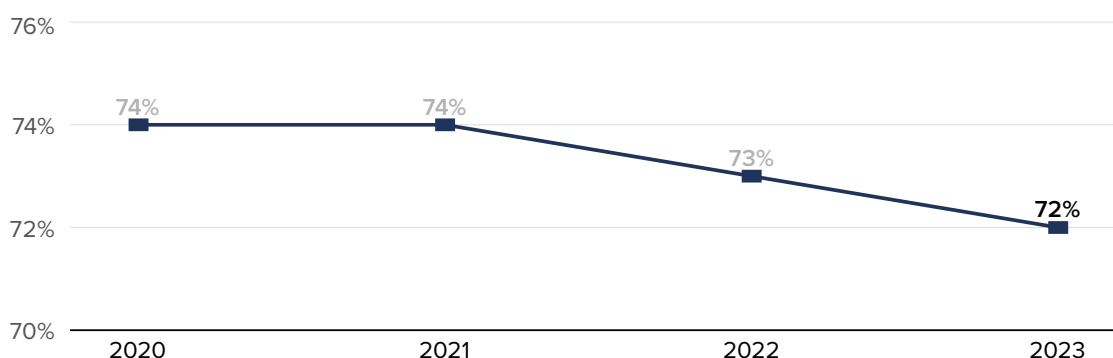
In the Republic of Moldova, 2,800 people, mostly Ukrainian refugee women and girls, received life-saving GBV prevention and response services through a leading Woman-led Organization supported by UNHCR.

In Malaysia, 652 refugee women and girls at risk benefited from community-based psychosocial support services provided by a WLO.

A Chadian WLO was supported to conduct a gender equality assessment in refugee-hosting areas to understand risks for Sudanese refugee women and girls and the capacities of communities, and to develop a multiyear GBV prevention strategy.

In Dadaab refugee camp, Kenya, a refugee women-led organization implemented the Girl Shine model which helped develop a greater sense of agency among refugee adolescent girls while contributing to a reduction in incidents of violence within the community, including child marriage.

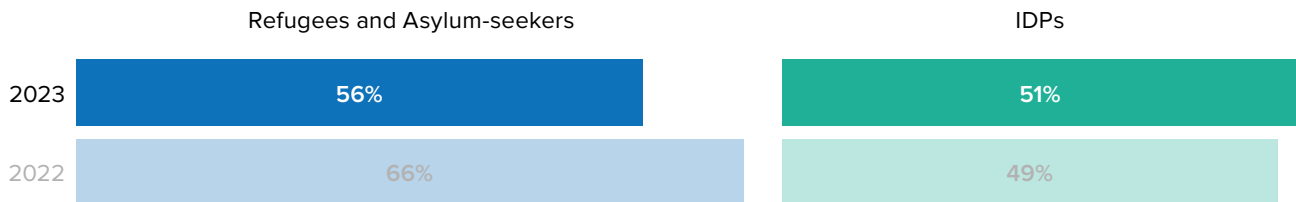
Percentage of countries where specialized GBV services are available to survivors



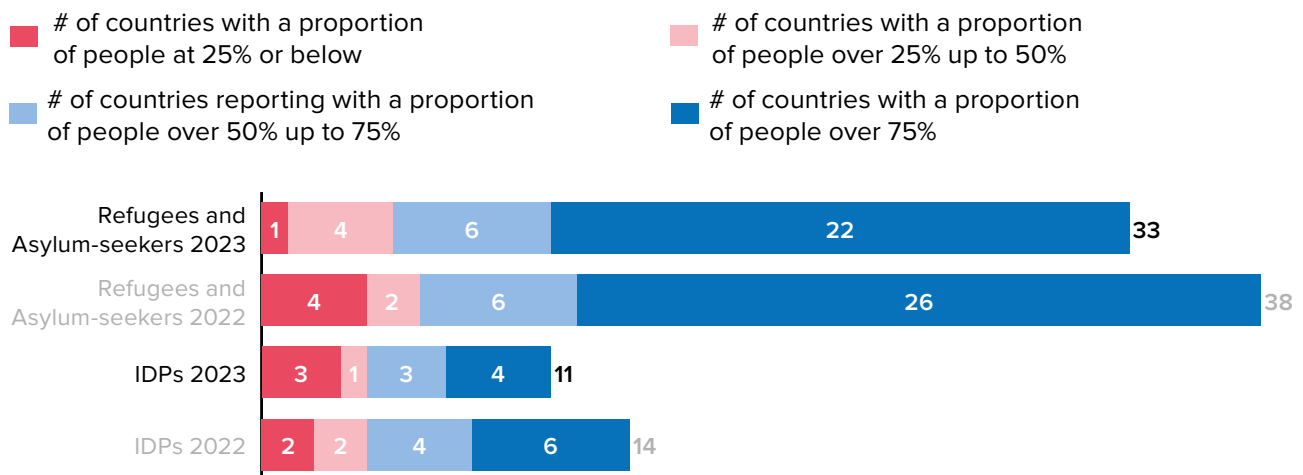
Core indicators



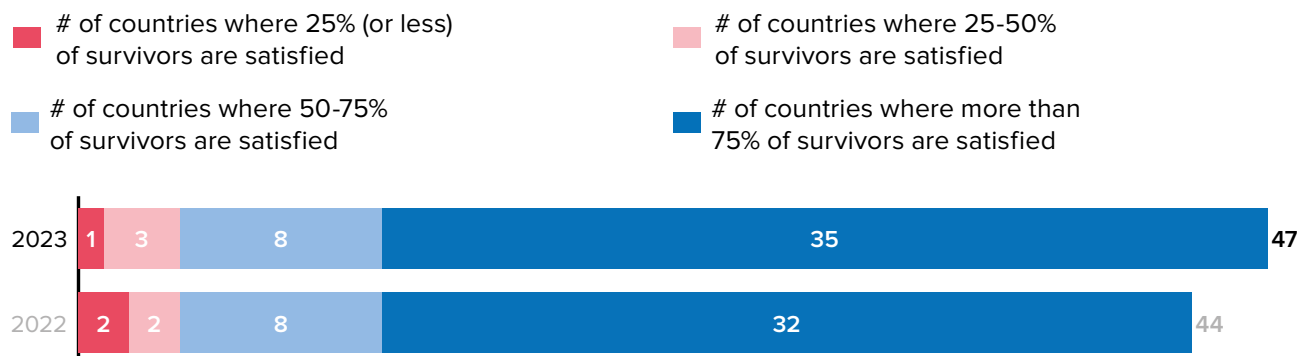
4.1 Proportion of people who know where to access available gender-based violence services



4.2 Proportion of people who do not accept violence against women



4.3 Proportion of Refugee and asylum-seeker survivors who are satisfied with gender-based violence case management services



Financial overview

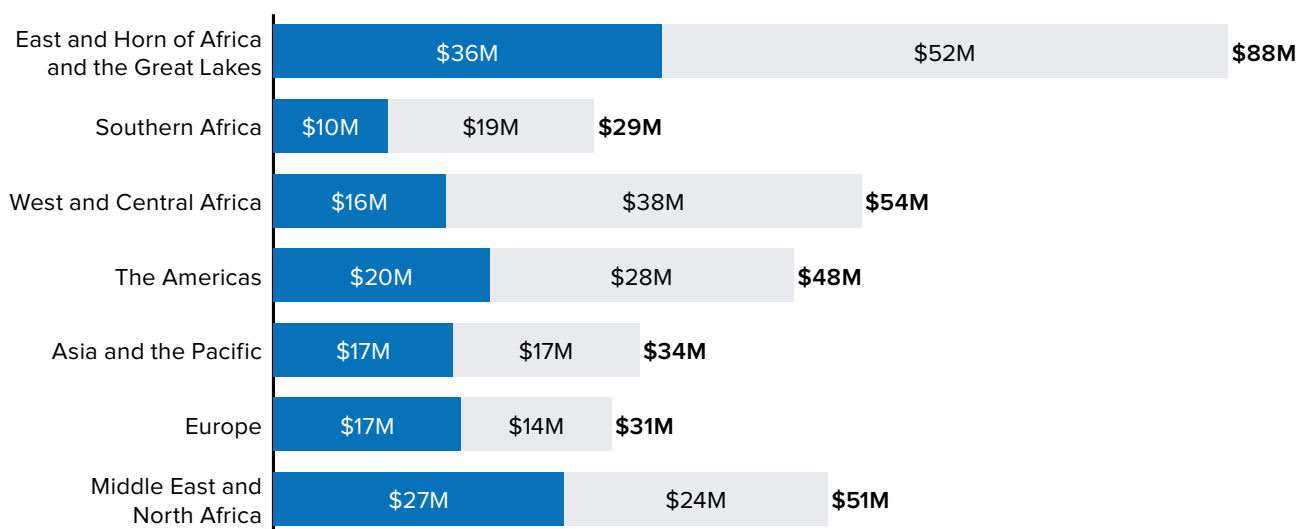
Global expenditure and budget for Gender-based violence

\$146 million spent against a budget of **\$339 million**

\$193 million of unmet needs or **57%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Gender-based violence

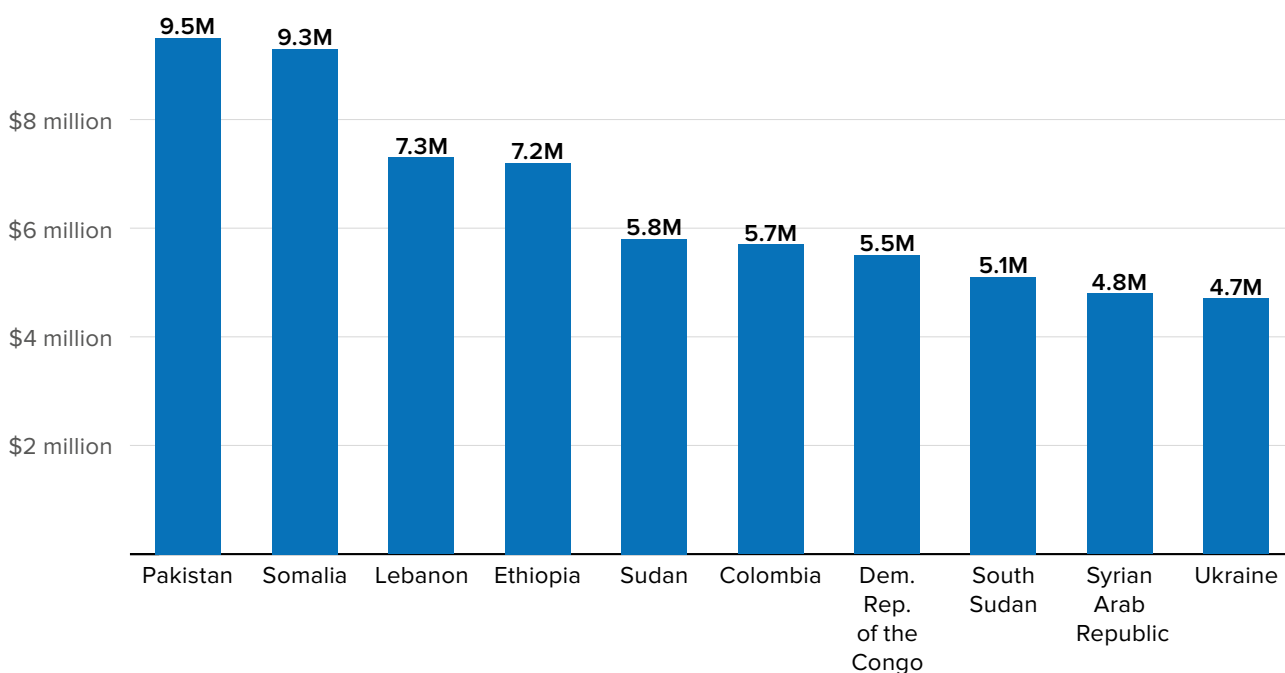
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Gender-based violence: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **44%** of **\$146 million** global expenditure in 2023.





A woman walks through the spontaneous refugee site in the border town of Adré, Chad, where makeshift shelters housed thousands of those fleeing from Sudan's conflict in 2023. UNHCR and partners registered new arrivals, addressed their most urgent humanitarian needs, and arranged convoys to relocate them to camps established away from the border. © UNHCR/Ying Hu



Outcome Area 5

In Bucharest, Romania, UNHCR's RomExpo Integrated Service Hub serves as a one-stop-shop for services available for refugees, helping 500-600 refugees each day, confidentially and free of charge. RomExpo brings the services of 15 organizations under one roof, including Government authorities, the European Union Agency for Asylum, UN agencies and partner NGOs. © UK for UNHCR/Ioana Epure

Child protection

Results in 2023

In 2023, UNHCR witnessed the devastating effects of conflicts and displacement on children and their families. **Over 50 million children were forcibly displaced**, mostly after fleeing from armed conflict. The **risks most commonly reported** by UNHCR operations were unaccompanied or separated children, followed by child labour, gender-based violence – including child marriage and sexual violence, physical violence or abuse against the child, and child neglect. Other risks included psychological distress, immigration detention, children with disabilities, recruitment by armed forces and groups, and child trafficking.

With the needs increasing at an alarming rate, the **funding gap** remained wide. In September 2023, UNHCR published an analysis of the funding of crucial inter-agency child protection services in refugee responses, showing they had received less than one quarter of the required funding, nine months through the year. Despite this shortfall, UNHCR, national authorities and partners maintained essential child protection services. Data from 126 UNHCR country operations showed that in 2023, 76% of countries had at least one child protection service available to forcibly displaced and stateless people, a slight decline from 78% in 2022, based on data from 125 countries. While services remained available, their quality suffered due to insufficient funding, exemplified by the rising caseworker-to-children-at-risk ratio.

UNHCR and its partners in 61 offices (including the multi-country offices that cover more than one country) provided child protection response services, including **Best Interests Procedures (BIP)** and **alternative care arrangements**, among others. Out of 24 countries reporting data in 2022 and 2023, 60% either improved or maintained their support levels for children at heightened risks with a BIP in 2023. In **Türkiye**, 60,000 children at risk were referred to multi-sectoral specialized services, and significant increases were observed in the number of children supported by a BIP (from 50% in 2022 to 69% in 2023). In **Sudan**, despite the eruption of a devastating conflict and related challenges of access, UNHCR strengthened child protection case management systems. BIP was provided for 9,823 children and they were referred to specialized services such as individual cash assistance, material support, legal assistance, medical care, psychosocial support and education.

Out of 25 UNHCR country operations reporting comparable data in 2022 and 2023, 18 reported that they had either maintained or increased the proportion of unaccompanied and separated children placed in alternative care arrangements, including family-based care. For instance, **Egypt**, **South Sudan** and **Mauritania** saw a substantial improvement in access to alternative care, reducing child protection risks by providing a safe environment. In **Niger**, about 80% of unaccompanied and separated children in the operation benefited from alternative care services. Foster families were identified to care for children in need, in collaboration with government and partner organizations.

UNHCR, together with UNICEF, provided technical guidance to the Governments of **Mexico** and the **United States**, in their efforts to develop mechanisms for decision-making on family reunification and durable solutions in the best interests of unaccompanied and separated children. UNHCR and UNICEF's blueprint for joint action was the subject of an [evaluation](#) published in 2023.

51 operations worked on establishing and strengthening **child protection coordination and partnership** with stakeholders, strategic programming and planning, and integrating child protection into other sectors' work.

In **Tunisia**, a National Child Protection Working Group was launched in November 2023, to scale up family-based alternative care arrangements for the rapidly growing number of unaccompanied children. In **Ukraine**, UNHCR facilitated five child protection mainstreaming trainings for UNHCR and partner staff of diverse sectors such as shelter and camp management, to ensure that those sectors prioritize and integrate child protection considerations into the design and implementation of their interventions, thus more effectively addressing the drivers of child protection risks such as poverty and lack of safe education.

40 UNHCR operations worked on strengthening **child protection systems and child-friendly procedures**, by advocating with national actors and for legal and policy reform, enhancing the national child protection system and local capacity, integrating refugee children in national plans and services and providing technical support on child-friendly procedures. For instance, over 3,700 national family welfare staff in **Colombia** received training on establishing mechanisms to address complaints and child rights violations. In **Ethiopia**, a national case management framework was introduced for **Somali refugee children**, followed by comprehensive training for the Government workforce to apply the framework, in order to ensure a consistent and effective approach to protecting refugee children.

Furthermore, 35 operations provided support to build **children's resilience and life skills** and 26 operations supported families to care for children. Overall, 63% of the countries either improved or maintained their support levels for community-based child protection programmes compared to 2022. For instance, in the **United Republic of Tanzania**, 49 community-based child protection structures were in operation across two camps, such as child protection committees, adolescent groups, child clubs, and foster parents' committees. In **Bangladesh**, community-based child protection networks played an important role in identifying and referring at-risk children to relevant service providers and facilitating the reunification of children with their families.

In 2023, UNHCR finalized its first-ever “**Policy on child protection**”, which was launched in early 2024, outlining six core actions for UNHCR to protect children. The policy was accompanied by **Operational Guidance**, and advanced drafts were used in 57 operations to design comprehensive child protection strategic plans and to implement child protection programming as part of UNHCR's multi-year strategic planning.

Child rights made significant progress at the **Global Refugee Forum 2023** with **the multi-stakeholder pledge on child rights**, led by the Governments of **Greece** and **Norway** and partners from **the Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts**. UNHCR's efforts at the Forum resulted in over 200 child-focused and child-sensitive pledges, including 68 on child protection, primarily by States committing to strengthening national child protection systems. Children were consulted in preparation for the Forum and at the actual event.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

Almost all UNHCR operations reported **challenges with child protection** in 2023, including government capacity (59%), funding (42%), partner capacity (27%), and restrictive legal and policy frameworks (26%).

Underfunding limited the number of caseworkers to conduct BIPs, increasing the **caseworker-to-children-at-risk ratio**. In **Uganda**, where children made up 57% of the refugee population, the ratio jumped from 1:97 to 1:213 after UNHCR partners reduced staffing. Despite this, UNHCR was able to initiate BIPs for half of the 55,825 children at risk, and 4,630 cases were successfully closed. By the end of the year 39,500 children, 84% of the total number of unaccompanied and separated children in the operation, had been placed in alternative care or reunified with their families.

Multisectoral monitoring results



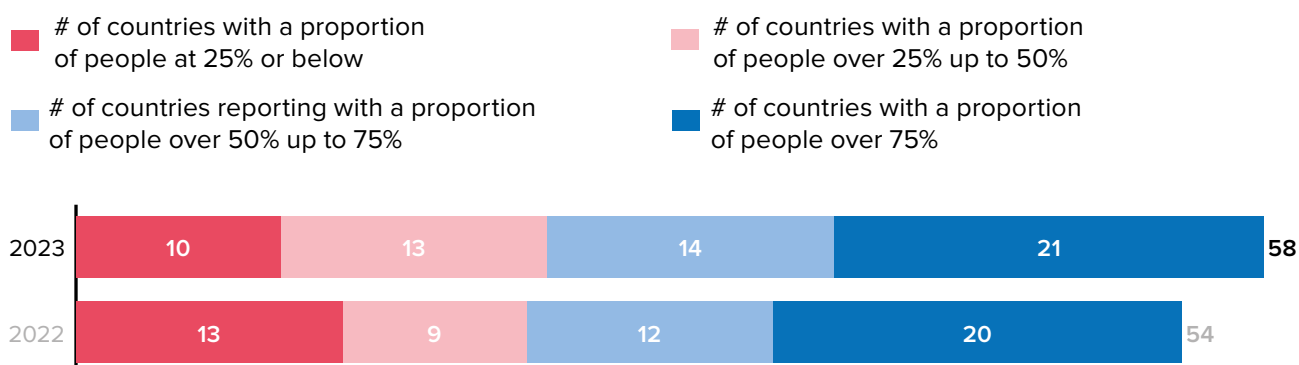
7 million children have received protection services including 3.8 million refugees and asylum-seekers, 2.1 million IDPs and 1.1 million Others of concern (163 countries reporting)

2022 result: 8.4 million in 154 countries reporting

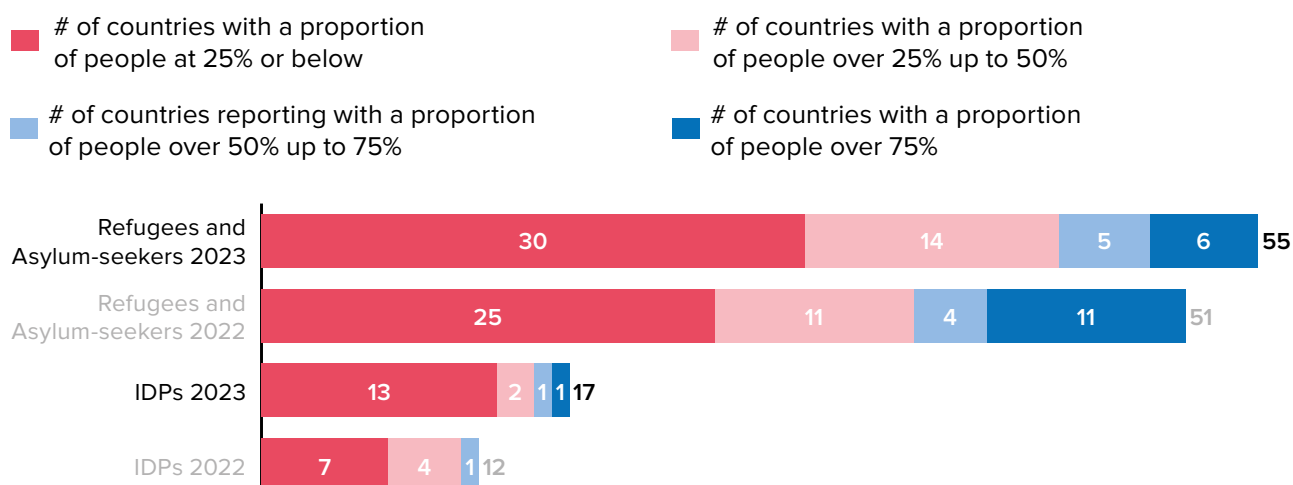
Core indicators



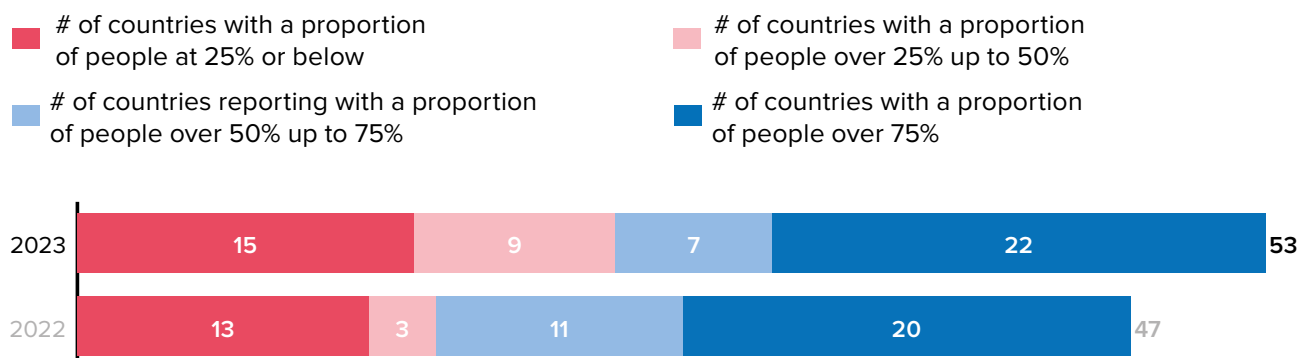
5.1 Proportion of refugee and asylum-seeker children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure



5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes



5.3 Proportion of unaccompanied and separated refugee and asylum-seeker children who are in an alternative care arrangement



Financial overview

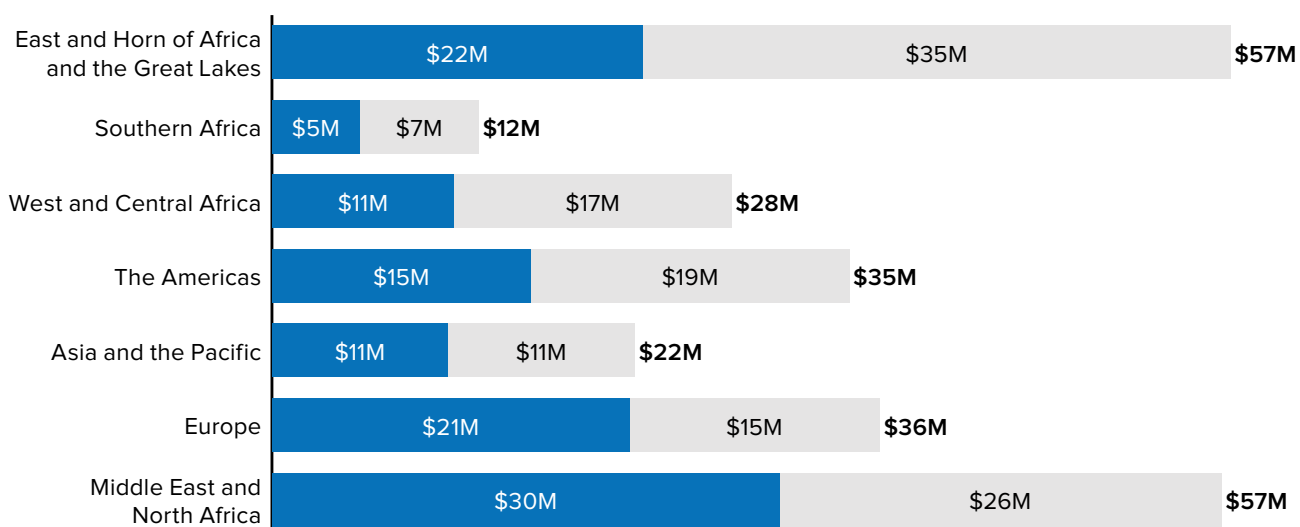
Global expenditure and budget for Child protection

\$118 million spent against a budget of **\$248 million**

\$131 million of unmet needs or **53%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Child protection

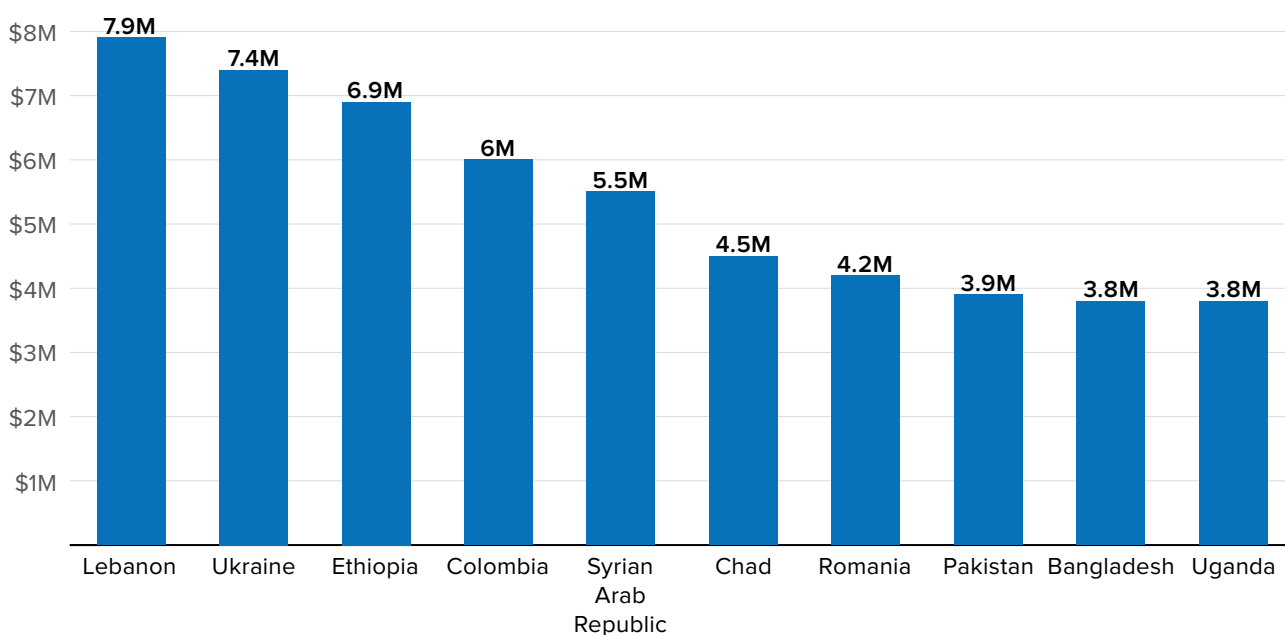
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Child protection: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **46%** of **\$118 million** global expenditure in 2023.





On Greece's Kos island, psychologist Ioanna (left) and case worker Sofia, experts from UNHCR's partner Praksis, lead a psychoeducational session for refugee children. With the help of an interpreter, they help the children understand their fundamental rights and address critical issues such as their relationship with their parents, bullying, empathy and child labour. © UNHCR/Socrates Baltagiannis



Outcome Area 6

Maier escaped the war in Syria more than 10 years ago. He and his family are being evacuated from Libya to UNHCR's Emergency Transit Centre in Romania, and will later be resettled in Norway. He is now looking forward to living in safety and for the education opportunities for his children, who are already high-achieving students at school. UNHCR urges other States to offer similar pathways for people in need of international protection. © UNHCR/Ziyad Alhamadi

Safety and access to justice

Results in 2023



In 2023, forcibly displaced and stateless people continued to face obstacles in accessing safety and justice, often deriving from their status, or lack

thereof, and from the ensuing discrimination and marginalization. Risks, including fear of being arrested, hindered access to essential services, negatively impacted their protection, and affected their ability to benefit from due process and justice.

In many countries, pressure to control borders resulted in restrictive policies and negative public perceptions, making it harder to obtain international protection and exposing asylum-seekers and refugees to a higher risk of immigration detention. Many countries continued to detain a considerable number of refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons in immigration detention whilst their cases are processed.

Publicly available **data** on the number of people detained in relation to their legal or immigration status is lacking for most countries and not specifically recorded in most national detention statistics. In 2023, UNHCR country operations reported that 24,059 asylum-seekers and 2,209 stateless persons were detained in relation to their status; this is an extremely low figure, which reflects only the limited number of cases known to UNHCR.

Conversely, some positive developments occurred in other contexts. For example, the number of stateless persons and refugees held in detention declined by 71% and approximately 15% respectively in **Australia**. In **Mexico**, successful litigation at the [UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention](#) enabled asylum-seekers to achieve monetary reparations for their arbitrary detention.

To support States in improving safety and access to justice for forcibly displaced and stateless people, UNHCR mobilized partnerships with national and international actors, including development actors, legal and academic communities, civil society organizations, human rights institutions and local authorities. For instance, at the Global Refugee Forum 2023, over 100 stakeholders from the [global legal community](#) committed to provide 1,000,000 hours of pro bono **legal advice**, building on the successful [2019 pledge](#), which generated 586,000 pro bono hours, worth \$400 million, over the subsequent three years. UNHCR continued efforts to gather more disaggregated data on access to justice for IDPs and refugees through its partnerships with the [Hague Institute for Innovation of Law](#) and released a study on justice needs in **Iraq**, which informed UNHCR's planning and programming in the country.

In all regions, UNHCR continued advocacy for the **detention** of asylum-seekers and refugees to be a measure of last resort and for ending child immigration detention. Together with UNICEF and the [International Detention Coalition](#), UNHCR leveraged support for a dedicated [multi-stakeholder pledge](#) at the Global Refugee Forum 2023. As co-lead of the [Alternatives to Immigration Detention workstream](#) of the UN Network on Migration, UNHCR also contributed to expanding the communities of practice on alternatives to immigration detention.

Across all regions, UNHCR and partners worked to increase **awareness of legal rights**, providing information, counselling, assistance, representation and alternative dispute resolution services, including through mobile clinics, to support forcibly displaced and stateless people in claiming rights and seeking remedies. For example, in **Türkiye**, UNHCR worked with 45 bar associations providing legal aid to 5,929 people, a 33% increase in the number of those assisted compared to 2022. In **Jordan**, UNHCR provided legal assistance to 59,628 refugees and asylum-seekers in refugee camps and urban areas, and in **Colombia**, UNHCR coordinated a network delivering legal advice to 35,553 forcibly displaced people, including refugees and IDPs.

Among others, UNHCR legal interventions supported many individuals in vulnerable situations, including survivors of gender-based violence and trafficking.

Access to legal aid and representation is critical for refugees in detention. Of the 46 UNHCR country operations reporting on safety and access to justice, 67% engaged in detention monitoring to minimize risks of rights violations and encourage the authorities to improve detention conditions. In Lebanon, UNHCR and partners undertook 6,500 **detention monitoring visits**, facilitating access to legal aid and support to ensure more dignified standards of treatment for at least 3,616 detainees. In Pakistan, UNHCR's legal assistance partners supported more than 77,000 Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers.

Training legal authorities and lawyers contributed to advancing protection and inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless persons. 80% of UNHCR country operations reporting in this area trained asylum authorities, police, border guards, judiciary, and other legal practitioners on refugee protection.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

Conflict, insecurity, weak rule of law, lack of access to remote areas and resource constraints exacerbated the challenges for forcibly displaced and stateless persons to access justice. Restrictions in access to asylum-seekers in detention also made it harder to support individuals to exercise their rights and seek remedies for rights violations. For example, in 30% of the reporting country operations, UNHCR faced restrictions on **access to places of detention**.

Advocacy and partnership with national human rights institutions and other actors, as well as innovative approaches using digital tools and mobile teams, were leveraged to address these challenges.

Another remaining challenge is the dearth of **disaggregated data** on access to justice for refugees, IDPs and stateless persons, which is critical for advocacy, policy and programming, particularly with development actors.

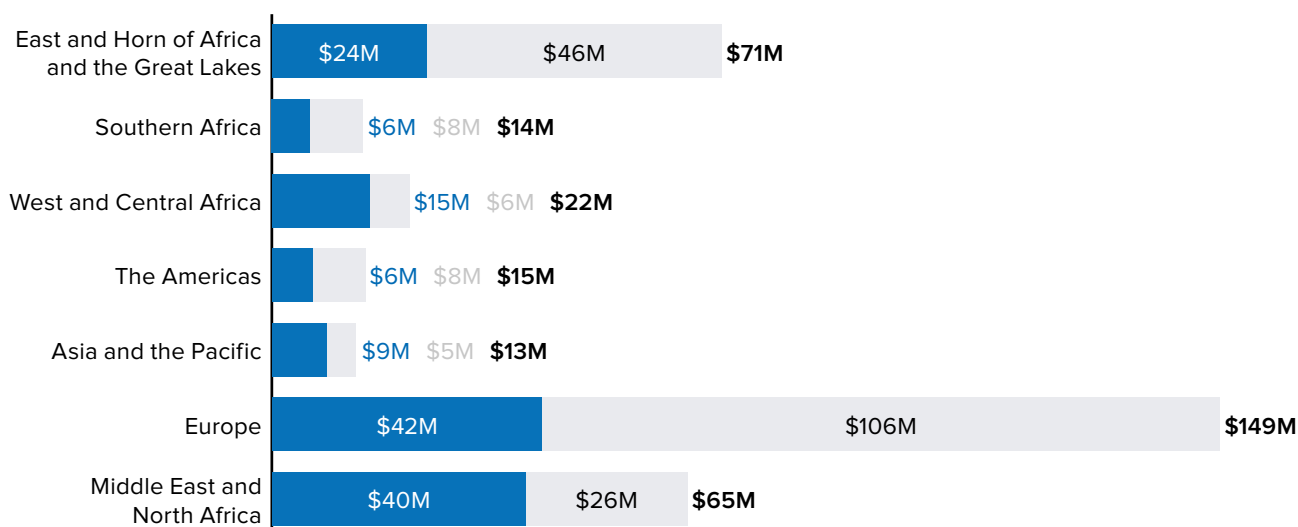
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Safety and access to justice

\$143 million spent against a budget of **\$348 million**
\$206 million of unmet needs or **59%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Safety and access to justice

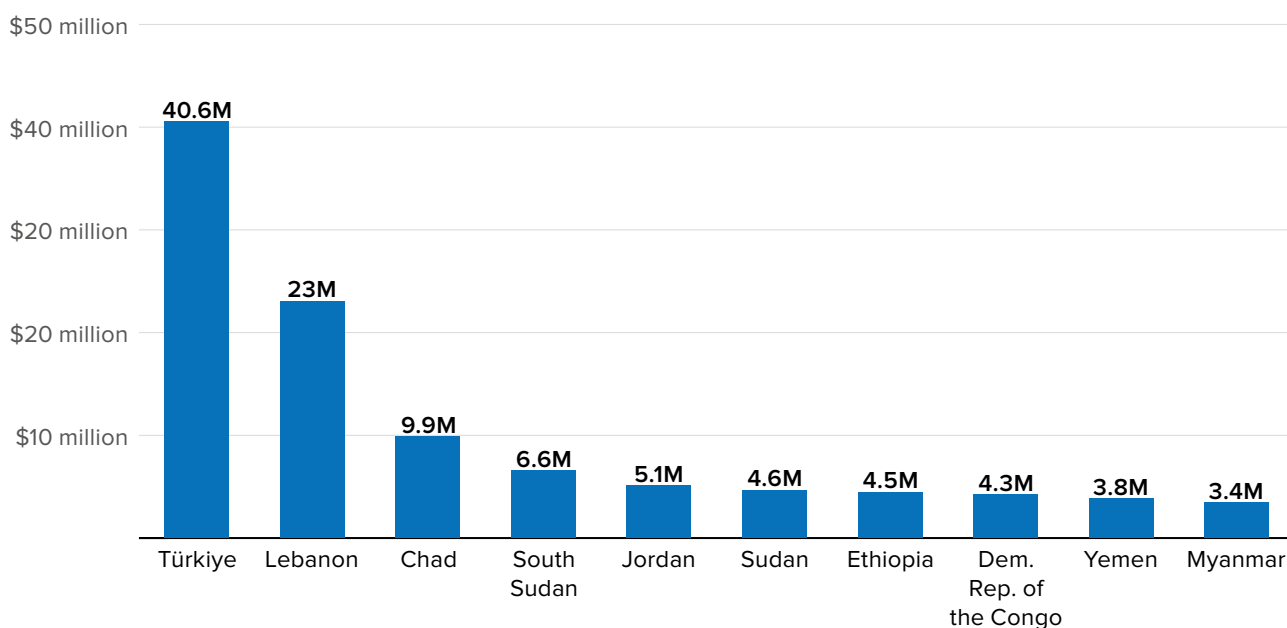
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Safety and access to justice: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **74%** of **\$143 million** global expenditure in 2023.





In Jordan, a mural illustrates Article 8 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the right to seek justice and remedy. The mural was created as part of a series commemorating the Universal Declaration's 75th anniversary. Article 8 reads: "Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law." © UNHCR/Roland Schönbauer



Outcome Area 7

Asia Al-Mashreqi, the Middle East and North Africa Regional Winner of the 2023 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award, speaks with students at Safia School in Sana'a, Yemen, where she used to be the principal and transformed the school into a model school for girls. She now leads one of Yemen's largest NGOs helping Yemenis and refugees survive a humanitarian crisis. © UNHCR/Mohammed Hamoud

Community engagement and women's empowerment

Results in 2023



UNHCR aims to protect people who have been forced to flee or who are stateless, helping them in addressing their situation and facilitating durable solutions. Often

the most efficient and effective way to achieve those goals is to build on their capacity and skills, by giving individuals and communities an opportunity to organize, participate, and represent their own interests.

In 2023, UNHCR invested in supporting community-based protection initiatives and in the participation of displaced and stateless people in all phases of UNHCR's annual programming cycle. 39 of UNHCR's country operations reported data on the extent to which UNHCR supported the participation of refugees and asylum-seekers, with 25 (64%)

recording that it was "extensive" and 11 (28%) that it was "moderate". For internally displaced people, 14 of UNHCR's operations reported data, with "extensive" support in 10 countries (71%) and "moderate" support in the remaining four.

UNHCR's country operations used a variety of methodologies to support communities' engagement in decisions and activities affecting them. 76 operations reported that they conducted [participatory assessments](#) in 2023, involving almost 48,000 refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced and stateless people. These thematic consultations, carried out by UNHCR and partner organizations, give people of all ages and characteristics a chance to share their experiences and views and to influence decisions involving them. Examples in 2023 included [Ecuador](#), where UNHCR consulted with 851 individuals, including persons

with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ persons; **South Sudan**, where UNHCR engaged with 3,529 individuals, ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities and minority groups; the **Syrian Arab Republic**, where 566 focus group discussions targeted 6,138 IDPs, refugees and host community members; and Ukraine, where 113 focus group discussions reached over 1,000 people.

Community structures, such as women's groups and refugee volunteers, played a critical role in communicating with communities, identifying people at heightened risk, and promoting peaceful co-existence. In **Chad**, UNHCR trained 3,255 community members representing 217 communities in leadership skills in 2023. In **India**, 272 community representatives were trained in mapping urgent community needs and identifying people at heightened risk in the community. In **Yemen**, community-based protection networks identified people at heightened risk and helped them to get the services they needed.

UNHCR worked increasingly with **grass-roots organizations**, globally and locally. [Grant Agreements with organizations led by displaced and stateless people](#) were provided to 107 organizations in 26 countries and [UNHCR's Refugee-led Innovation Fund](#) awarded 27 initiatives across 22 countries. UNHCR supported refugee-led organizations (RLO) in **Ecuador, Greece, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico and Türkiye** by facilitating dialogue with the authorities, offering material support and coordination, and by supporting them to build up their own capacity for action.

UNHCR also invested in forcibly displaced and stateless people's participation in the [Global Refugee Forum 2023](#). Over 320 participants with lived experience of displacement or statelessness, including the members of the global [Advisory Board](#), directly contributed to the debate.

UNHCR continued to strengthen its **accountability to affected people** through learning opportunities for staff and partners, engagement with community-based organizations, roll-out and scale up of digital communication tools, research and advocacy as well as engagement in inter-agency coordination platforms, with the goal of ensuring that the voices of communities and individuals inform UNHCR

programming. (For detailed information, please refer to the [Accountability to Affected People](#) focus area.) UNHCR's global monitoring showed that in 2023, 67% of 132 reporting countries had a multi-channel feedback and response system that was designed based on consultations with displaced and stateless people. This is in line with 2022 results.

UNHCR also invested in **women's representation in leadership and decision-making structures**.

The overall picture was largely unchanged from 2022, with an average of 40% of reporting countries reaching or surpassing the 50% mark in both refugees/asylum seekers and IDP populations, although there were promising increases in **Uganda, Nigeria, and Egypt**. In Logone-Birni, **Cameroon**, women were recognized as members of customary courts, property owners, and village leaders. Women's involvement in peacebuilding initiatives was strengthened in **South Sudan**, while in India, men and boys positively engaged in gender equality programming.

UNHCR strove to empower **women** by enhancing access to schools and **higher education**, economic inclusion, skills development, and **digital inclusion**. In **Brazil**, livelihood programmes bolstered entrepreneurial prospects for indigenous women, while community-based microfinance initiatives helped women's economic inclusion in **Mali**. In several countries, women's committees, female social workers, and female volunteers were instrumental in improving UNHCR's response to the specific needs of women and girls. In several UNHCR operations, multi-purpose community centres functioned as information hubs and safe spaces for women and girls, providing protection services, assistance, and referrals to other specialized services.

UNHCR partnered with **Nigeria's** Ministry of Women Affairs and UNFPA to support women's livelihoods. In the **Republic of Moldova**, UNHCR and UN Women completed a [mapping of local CSOs supporting the refugee response](#) and collaborated with the Gender Task Team on the implementation of the [Gender Accountability Framework](#). In **Slovakia**, UNHCR collaborated with a women-led organization to operate a community centre, while in **Malawi, Mauritania and Ukraine**, UNHCR provided technical and financial support to organizations led by forcibly displaced women.

Age, Gender and Diversity

Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) approaches remained central in UNHCR's work, as recorded in the annual "[AGD accountability report](#)" and [documented practices](#). An [evaluation](#) of the implementation of UNHCR's AGD policy found numerous good emerging practices such as a stronger use of participatory assessments, the tailoring of accountability mechanisms to meet diverse information and communication needs, and a growing collaboration with organizations with specialized knowledge on disabilities and LGBTIQ+.

Engaging with communities and building trust with their organizations demands significant time and human resources, yet in 2023 underfunding often forced UNHCR's operations to deprioritize community engagement in favour of more immediate needs. The organizations with which UNHCR sought to engage were hindered by their limited capacity, by legal and financial barriers – such as restrictions on grass-roots organizations' registration, and by the lack of agile tools to channel funds to support their work. UNHCR's ability to regularly consult with communities and collect up-to-date information was often hindered by language barriers or by a lack of access due to security concerns or restrictions imposed by authorities. Discriminatory legislation and social and cultural norms pose additional barriers for engagement of marginalized groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, older people, and LGBTIQ+ persons.

UNHCR supported refugee women's participation in national, regional, and global fora and closely collaborated with several women-led organizations to rally support for the GRF [multi-stakeholder pledge](#) on gender equality and the protection from gender-based violence and the [Avec Elles](#) pledge.

In line with the [UN System-wide Action Plan \(UN-SWAP\) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women](#), UNHCR initiated a Global Gender Focal Points network across its operations to improve and disseminate staff knowledge and skills on gender analysis and gender-sensitive programming. [Promising and Emerging Practices on Gender Equality](#) from eight countries showcased innovative and transformative approaches. UNHCR advocated for funding for organizations led by displaced women, including through the [Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund \(WPHF\)](#).

UNHCR provided targeted support to nearly 41,000 **older persons** and 480,000 **persons with disabilities** in 2023. UNHCR's support included facilitating access to cash assistance and relief items, relocating vulnerable households to safer areas, providing referrals to health services such as rehabilitation and assistive devices, and assisting refugees in accessing social assistance benefits

for disabilities. 15 country operations, compared to only four in 2022, managed to facilitate access to enhanced national systems for refugees with disabilities and older persons, including by supporting individuals in obtaining national disability certifications, therefore enabling equal access to [national social protection schemes](#) for persons with disabilities.

Almost 6,000 **children with disabilities** received community-based support and financial assistance to access education in 10 countries (**Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Iraq, Moldova, Rwanda and Yemen**). In Kigali, UNHCR collaborated with the Rwandan National Association of Deaf Women to launch a pilot Rwandan **sign language** class for 22 deaf refugees, their families, and community leaders, who underwent training. One graduate secured a job in a school for children with disabilities.

The prevalence of persons with disabilities recorded in UNHCR's refugee registration system, proGres, was only 3.03% at the end of 2023, far below the estimated 16% of the world population living with a disability. **Ukraine** accounted for 54% of all newly registered disabilities in 2023.

UNHCR supported grass-roots **refugee youth** organizations in **El Salvador, Ethiopia, the Dominican Republic, Kenya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, South Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda and Yemen**. The initiatives supported by UNHCR aimed to bolster advocacy, peacebuilding, social and recreational activities led by refugee youth. In the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, UNHCR's **Regional Youth Peacebuilding Programme** empowered 498 refugee and host community youth with skills, resources and platforms to actively engage in conflict resolution, dialogue, and community-building activities. 314 young people secured paid employment opportunities as a result. On World Youth Day, 4,000 young supporters and refugees took part in the **Youth with Refugees Art Contest**.

UNHCR carried out an organization-wide stocktaking exercise to assess progress in implementing the recommendations of the 2021 **"Global Roundtable on protection and solutions for LGBTIQ+ people in forced displacement"** in various

areas of its activity. The **findings** were presented during a follow-up event co-convened with the **UN Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity** and attended by numerous civil society organizations. UNHCR focused on advocacy, on increased collaboration with LGBTIQ+ organizations and on training its workforce. This included the release of the French and **Spanish** versions of the **LGBTIQ+ online course**, completed by more than 1,000 learners by the end of 2023, and other structured learning initiatives such as the training of trainers.

63 operations reported activities targeting or mainstreaming the needs of forcibly displaced LGBTIQ+ persons in 2023. 20 operations facilitated engagement with LGBTIQ+ people, including in participatory assessments. Several operations such as **Ecuador, Peru, Guatemala, El Salvador, Moldova, South Africa and Ukraine** actively cooperated with grass-roots civil society organizations, on advocacy, training, case management and facilitation of solutions.

© UNHCR/Pauline Eluere



Fast Retailing partners with UNHCR for the 3rd Youth with Refugees Art Contest

reaching 1,000 skilled refugees by 2025.

Fast Retailing, UNIQLO's parent company, has been a key partner of UNHCR since 2007, supporting refugees in innovative ways including clothing donations, winter aid, and a self-reliance programme for refugee women in Bangladesh. So far, 425 women have completed sewing training in Cox's Bazar, with the goal of

In 2023, Fast Retailing also co-sponsored the **Youth with Refugees Art Contest**, engaging over 4,000 young people from 130 countries. The company supported art workshops for refugees in Cox's Bazar, Yokohama, New York, and other cities as part of the competition. The winning t-shirt designs are now on sale in UNIQLO stores in 14 countries, with \$3 from every sale going to UNHCR. Additionally, UNIQLO will donate \$100,000 to UNHCR as part of the campaign.

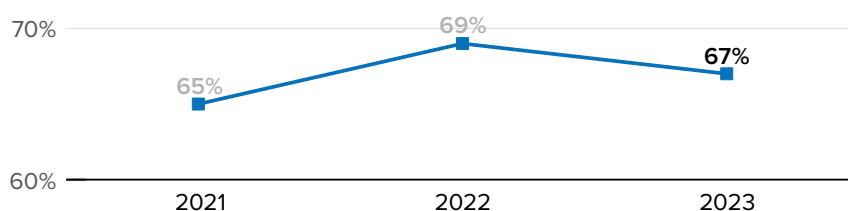
Multisectoral monitoring results



67% of reporting countries (132 countries reporting) had a multi-channel feedback and response system that was designed based on consultations with forcibly displaced and stateless people

2022 result: 69% in 144 countries reporting

Percentage of countries with a multi-channel feedback and response system designed based on consultations with displaced and stateless people

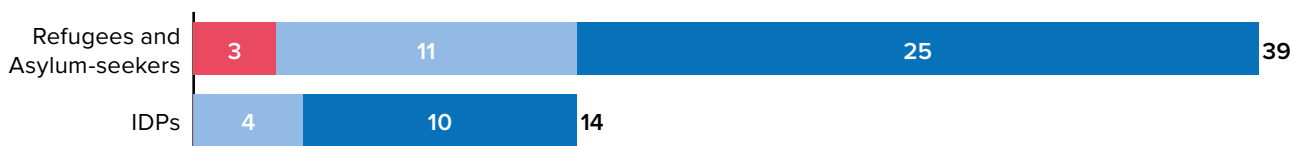


Core indicators



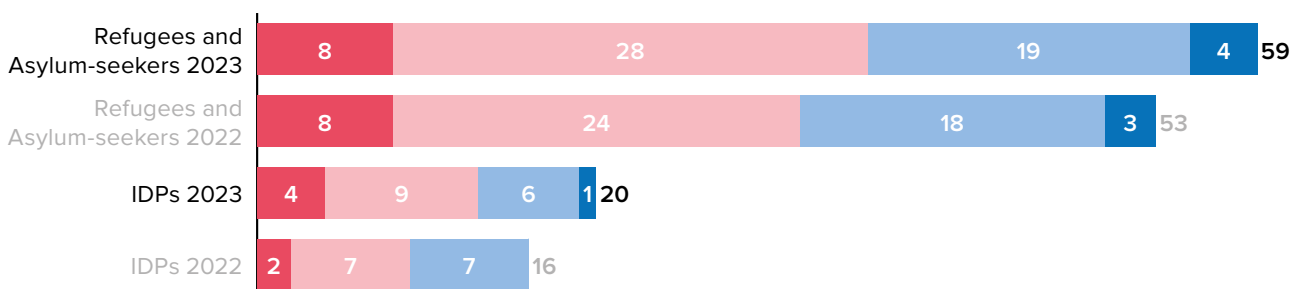
7.1 Extent participation of forcibly displaced people across programme phases is supported

■ # of countries reported "Limited"
 ■ # of countries reported "Moderate"
 ■ # of countries reported "Extensive"



7.3 Proportion of women participating in leadership/management structures

■ # of countries with a proportion of people at 25% or below
 ■ # of countries with a proportion of people over 25% up to 50%
 ■ # of countries with a proportion of people over 50% up to 75%
 ■ # of countries with a proportion of people over 75%



Financial overview

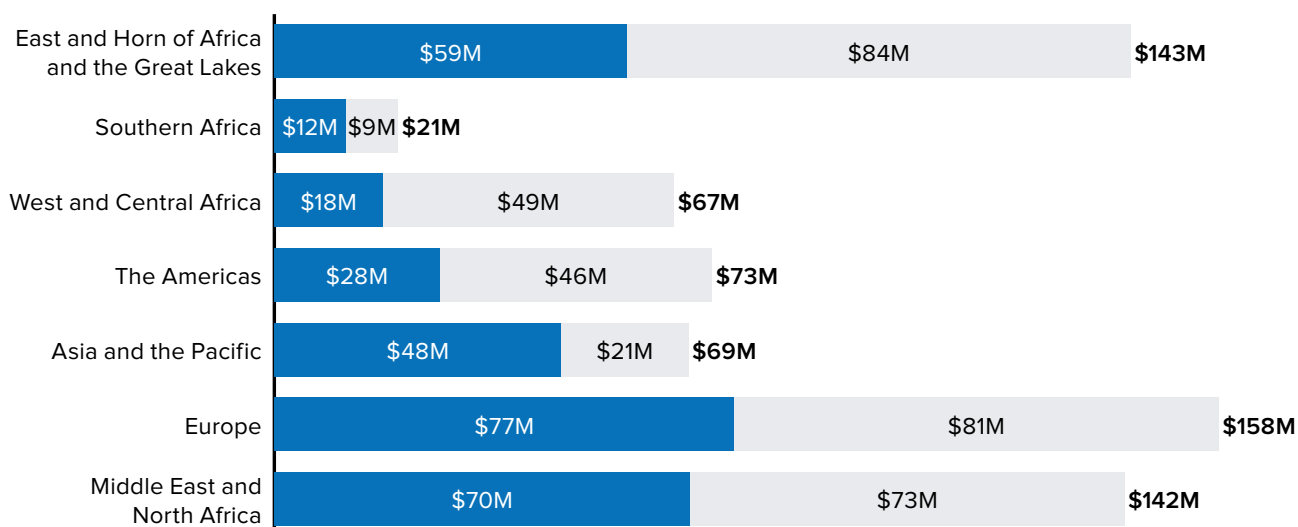
Global expenditure and budget for Community engagement and women's empowerment

\$316 million spent against a budget of **\$678 million**

\$363 million of unmet needs or **53%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Community engagement and women's empowerment

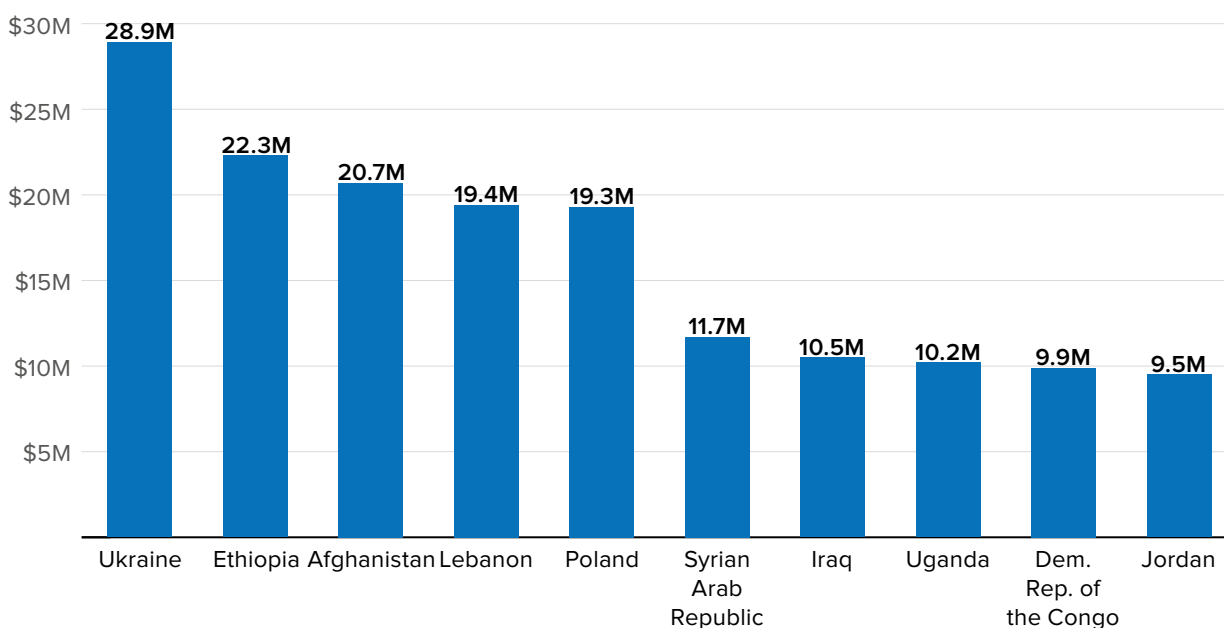
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Community engagement and women's empowerment: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **51%** of **\$316 million** global expenditure in 2023.





Outcome Area 8

In the Syrian city of Aleppo, Omar, 60, receives the cash assistance provided UNHCR for families whose homes were affected by the earthquakes that struck the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye in February 2023. © UNHCR/Hameed Maarouf

Well-being and basic needs

Results in 2023



To meet basic needs, including in emergencies, UNHCR distributes **cash**, a key modality of response, and where that is not possible it distributes **core**

relief items and **clean cooking fuel** to help people who have been forced to flee from their homes. When local market assessments show it is possible, UNHCR aims to use cash as it is a cost-efficient way of receiving assistance. Having cash to spend also helps forcibly displaced people to participate in the local economy and be included in the society where they live, increasing their economic empowerment, financial inclusion and social protection. UNHCR carries out monitoring and evaluation to ensure the quality of cash assistance and strengthen partnerships, and continually seeks innovative approaches to improve its use of cash.

UNHCR delivered more than **\$760 million in cash assistance to 7.3 million people in over 110 countries** in 2023, principally in **Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Jordan, Lebanon and Afghanistan**. The total amount of cash disbursed fell

by more than 20% from 2022, a decrease explained by the exceptional funding of the initial response to the Ukraine crisis in 2022 and by a record shortfall of available funds in 2023. 95% of the cash disbursed was unrestricted, giving recipients the power to choose how to use it.

Where cash assistance was not the preferred modality, UNHCR provided in-kind **non-food item** (NFI) support to help refugees and other displaced or stateless people meet their basic needs for household and domestic items. Approximately 8.1 million people received basic NFIs in 72 countries, including blankets, sleeping mats, plastic buckets, hygiene/sanitary kits, jerry cans and kitchen sets. Post-distribution monitoring of NFI distributions in several countries underscored the need to continue promoting, when conditions and funds allow for it, a cash-based approach to basic needs assistance wherever possible.

In-kind assistance proved instrumental in several large-scale emergency operations where cash assistance could not be implemented due to the specific nature of the emergencies, such as natural disasters and climate displacements. This included

the earthquake in **Türkiye** and the **Syrian Arab Republic**, the floods in **Libya**, and the aftermath of the cyclone in **Malawi and Mozambique**. Additionally, due to conditions not being conducive for cash programmes, emergency responses throughout the Sudan situation (including **Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Sudan**) and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** situation were supported with life-saving in-kind assistance, including core relief and shelter items. Under the [Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response](#), 299,000 people who had fled to neighbouring countries received in-kind NFI assistance. In addition, 396,000 refugees within Sudan and 164,000 internally displaced Sudanese received in-kind assistance.

The year concluded with the strategic pre-positioning of in-kind assistance in **Egypt** in anticipation of potential large-scale displacement resulting from the Gaza crisis. In total, in 2023, with support from governments and private donors, UNHCR delivered **in-kind assistance to 16.7 million people**, chartering **55 emergency airlifts**, and sending more than **31,000 metric tons of assistance by air, road, and sea**.

In line with its climate action objectives, UNHCR made significant steps toward improving assistance through **sustainable logistics and warehousing** practices. This included large efforts in greener specifications for non-food items and investments in sustainable practices throughout its supply chain.

80 UNHCR country operations reported **data on distributions of cash and/or non-food items** to refugees and asylum-seekers in 2023. In 28 of those countries, the majority of refugees and asylum-seekers received such aid. This was a decrease from 2022 when 45 of the 76 countries reporting data reported that the majority had received such aid. 21 country operations reported on distributions for IDPs in 2023, and 15 of them reported no more than 25% of IDPs received cash and/or non-food items in 2023. UNHCR's largest cash and basic needs programme in 2023 was in **Ukraine**, where UNHCR reached 899,000 people in 22 regions with cash assistance. Most were people from Ukraine's eastern and southern regions, along the front line of the conflict. UNHCR provided cash for solid fuel purchases

to almost 80,000 households with specific vulnerabilities, including households headed by older persons and households with people with disabilities. UNHCR [won an award](#) for its innovative use of blockchain technology in the disbursements of cash assistance in Ukraine, providing real time traceability of funds.

575,000 internally displaced Ukrainians, returnees and war-affected people, including in newly liberated areas, received relief items from UNHCR, including bedding, clothes, kitchen sets and hygiene kits. As part of the 2023-24 winterization response, UNHCR helped over 900,000 displaced and war-affected people with cash for winter energy needs, housing and insulation assistance, winterized non-food item kits, winter clothing, generators, and support for winter preparation at collective sites.

Other countries with large cash and basic needs programmes in 2023 included Jordan and Lebanon.

In **Jordan**, UNHCR and WFP switched to a new targeting model for cash assistance, based on the World Bank 2022 Proxy Means Test, which estimates household poverty. UNHCR transitioned 70% of recipients, and 96% of those in camps, to refugee-owned mobile wallets, making it easier for them to access digital financial services. However, reduced funding meant that refugees faced significant challenges in meeting their most basic needs, and they reported struggling to pay for health and medicines, food and rent especially.

In **Lebanon**, UNHCR addressed the basic needs of 173,200 vulnerable refugee households with monthly multi-purpose cash and a one-off grant in response to increased vulnerability generated by the conflict in the south of Lebanon. UNHCR distributed core relief items to 51,000 refugee households and 9,286 vulnerable Lebanese households. But underfunding meant that it could not provide any winter cash assistance to vulnerable refugees, and UNHCR and WFP had to stop providing monthly cash assistance to 92,000 families, leaving 30% of eligible vulnerable families without regular cash assistance. Post-distribution and outcome monitoring showed that about 76% of assisted households were still showing expenditure below the minimum survival expenditure basket, and 91% of assisted refugees had turned to harmful

coping strategies, including 13% who resorted to emergency coping strategies.

Globally, 95% of the respondents in UNHCR's **post-distribution monitoring (PDM)** reported that cash improved their living conditions, compared to 93% in 2022. Cash helped reduce feelings of stress for 95% of the surveyed households, up from 92% in 2022. A clear majority of recipients preferred cash, with only 4% indicating a preference for in-kind assistance. In Ukraine, for example, some people in need, such as older people, were less able to access or less comfortable with the digital technology used in cash transfers, and they preferred in-kind assistance delivered in person.

In line with the drive for the **economic inclusion** of refugees, UNHCR reached more than one third of beneficiaries with cash through their own bank or mobile money account. Enabling refugee-owned accounts contributes to digital inclusion, which brings a tangible impact to the lives of refugees, including women's empowerment. Where national regulations did not allow refugees' access to formal financial services in 2023, UNHCR achieved alternative means for delivering cash, such as pre-paid cards.

73 countries conducted post-distribution monitoring in 2023. UNHCR also published findings on cash from 2022 post-distribution monitoring in **Europe** and **Asia**. It also launched multi-year multi-country research in **Mauritania, Mexico and the Republic of Moldova**, to collect high-quality evidence on the impact of cash.

UNHCR is accountable for cash coordination in refugee settings and co-chairs the **Global Cash Advisory Group** with OCHA. In line with the transition plan for the new IASC cash coordination model, all 12 refugee settings planned to transition within 12 months have succeeded. For 10 of the 12 Cash Working Groups (CWGs) in refugee settings, UNHCR managed to move to an arrangement with a local co-chair – either from the government or local NGO, with an aim to achieve sustainable arrangements for cash coordination.

Among household-level basic needs that contribute to well-being, UNHCR advocates for **clean cooking solutions** for forcibly displaced people. In 2023, data from 51 countries where UNHCR operations reported data on primary reliance on clean cooking

fuels and technology showed that in 24 of those countries, more than 75% of refugees and asylum-seekers had primary reliance on clean fuels and technology. Among IDPs, seven of the 13 countries reporting data in 2023 reported that less than 25% of IDPs had primary reliance on cooking fuels.

In countries where clean cooking solutions are locally available and accessible, mainly in the Americas, the Middle East and North Africa, UNHCR supports refugees with cash-based assistance. In countries where the host community relies primarily on firewood, UNHCR prioritizes efforts to provide clean cooking programmes. **Algeria, Bangladesh and Rwanda** are among the leading countries in terms of **LPG access for cooking**, with UNHCR supporting 142,000 households overall. **Djibouti, Mauritania and Niger** are also key countries in the implementation of LPG programmes. **Ethiopia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe** are piloting alternative clean options, such as electricity, solar e-cooking, and biogas. When clean cooking options are unavailable, UNHCR intensifies efforts to provide transitional solutions that are cleaner than firewood, such as the distribution and production of green briquettes and improved cooking stoves. **Burundi and Kenya** led in those technologies, thanks in part to UNHCR's collaboration with FAO, while UNHCR reinforced its efforts in **Ethiopia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania**.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

Shrinking humanitarian funding led to an overall reduction in UNHCR support to help forcibly displaced and stateless people meet their basic needs. While the number of UNHCR operations reporting on the proportion of people receiving cash or in-kind support increased slightly compared to 2022, they were able to assist a much smaller share of the population than the previous year.

UNHCR implemented data-driven, participatory targeting strategies in a range of contexts, such as the Ukraine Situation. These were based on quantitative methods to create vulnerability profiles, alongside the use of community consultations and expert opinion. The Office also continued to work closely with WFP through the **UNHCR-WFP Targeting Hub**.

While cash undeniably helped displaced people cover their basic needs, major gaps and protection risks remained. Almost 70% of the households interviewed in the cash PDM surveys could meet only half or less of their basic needs, a 5% increase from 2022. 60% of the surveyed households engaged in one or more **negative coping mechanisms** to meet their basic needs, although that was less than 72% of households in 2022. In 2023, 11% of surveyed households reported some challenges in receiving, keeping or spending cash assistance, a clear decrease from 18% in 2022.

Supporting refugees in camps and settlements to rely on clean cooking fuels and technology remains challenging due to limited funding for cooking needs. Private sector involvement is insufficient, as refugees may struggle to afford cleaner solutions, and market-based options are scarce. The partners that supported the achievement of this outcome were mainly humanitarian actors using humanitarian resources to implement these activities, although a few partners were supported with development financing.

Multisectoral monitoring results



Cash assistance

7.3 million refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs received cash assistance (110 countries reporting)

2022 result: 9.8 million in 109 countries reporting

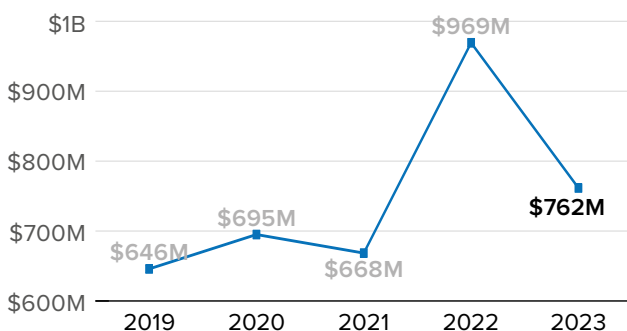


Core relief items

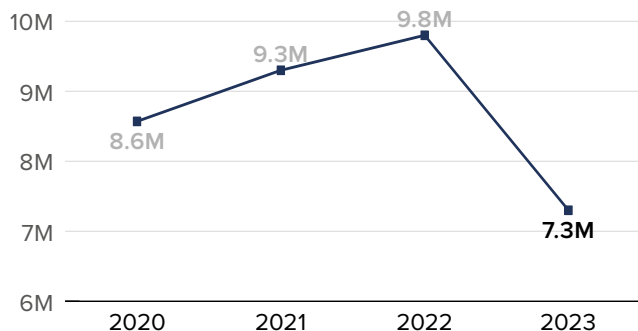
8.1 million refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs received non-food items, including core relief items (72 countries reporting)

Indicator not available in 2022

Cash assistance | 2019-2023



Number of people receiving cash assistance | 2020-2023



Number of countries reporting: 100 countries in 2020, 96 in 2021, 109 in 2022 and 110 in 2023.

The impact of cash on protection

A [study](#) on cash assistance for internally displaced people in [Yemen](#) confirmed that unrestricted cash, improving the ability to cover basic needs and debts, has a positive impact on physical safety, deters new displacement and affects the well-being of all household members, including older people. It found that protection outcomes also depend on the cash transfer value and duration.

UNHCR also published learning on cash assistance and child protection from the [Republic of Moldova, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Ukraine](#) that highlighted ways of using [cash as an effective enabler for child protection](#).

How do people use cash from UNHCR?

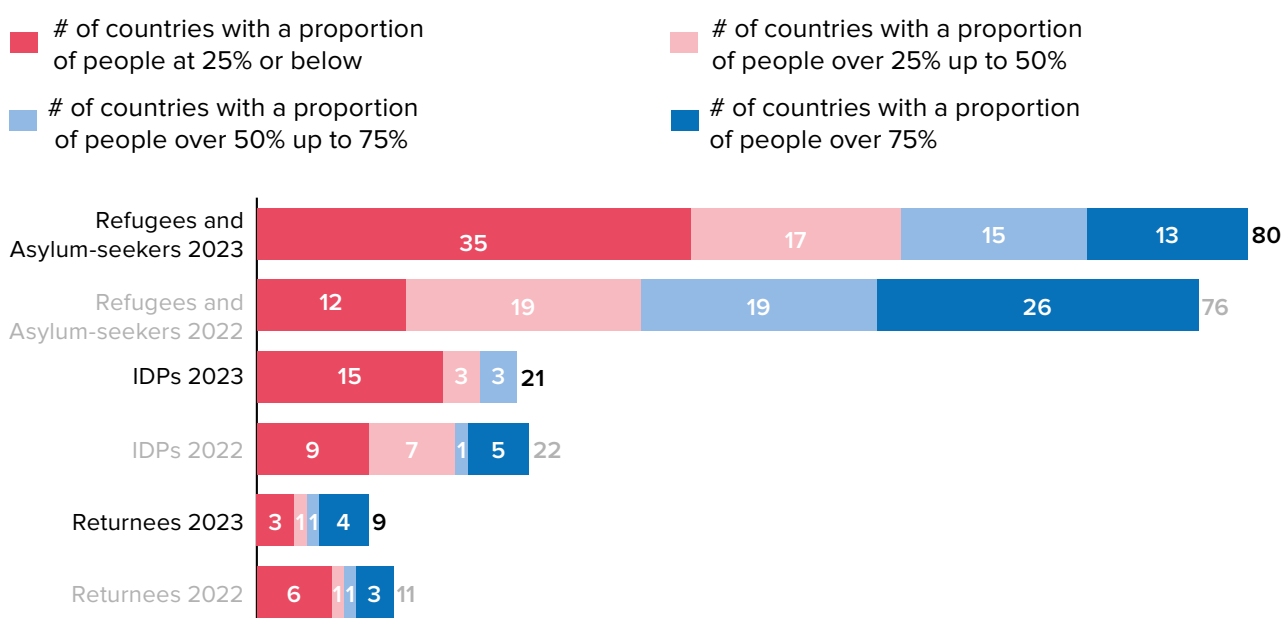
UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies have increasingly moved to cash assistance and the use of cash in humanitarian assistance has increased by 41% since 2015.

Studies have repeatedly shown that cash is the most efficient and effective form of assistance. Further, new technology, such as mobile money and digital wallets, makes it easy to send cash directly to displaced populations and promotes financial and digital inclusion.

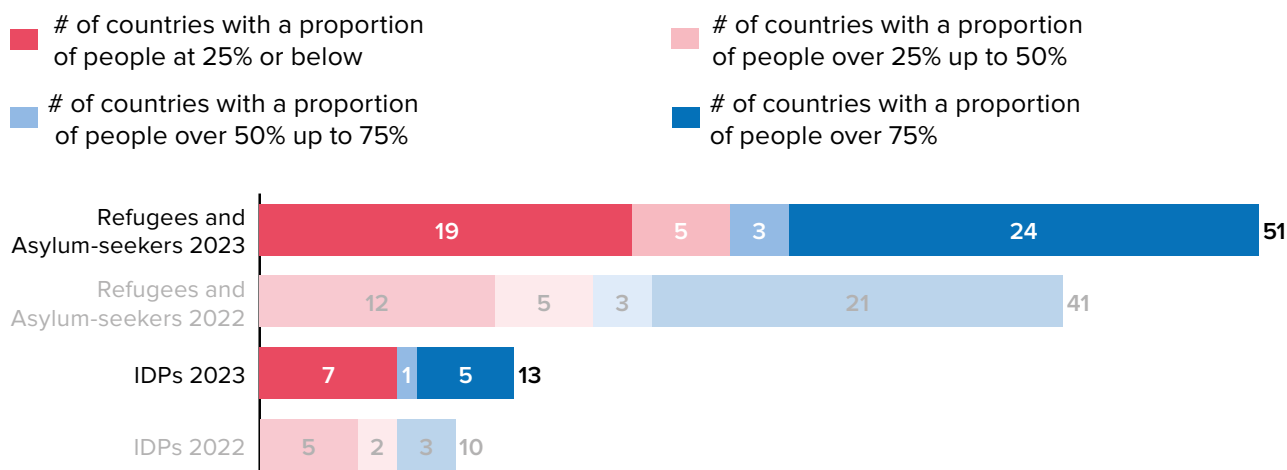
Core indicators



8.1 Proportion of people who received cash transfers and/or non-food items



8.2 Proportion of people with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology



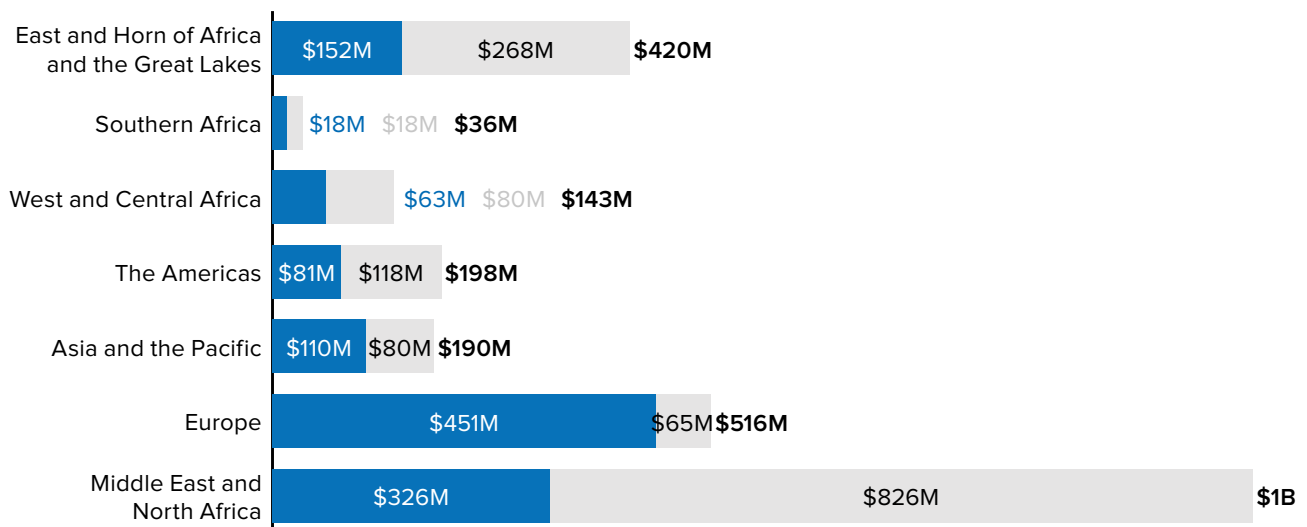
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Well-being and basic needs

\$1.203 billion spent against a budget of **\$2.660 billion**
\$1.458 billion of unmet needs or **55%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Well-being and basic needs

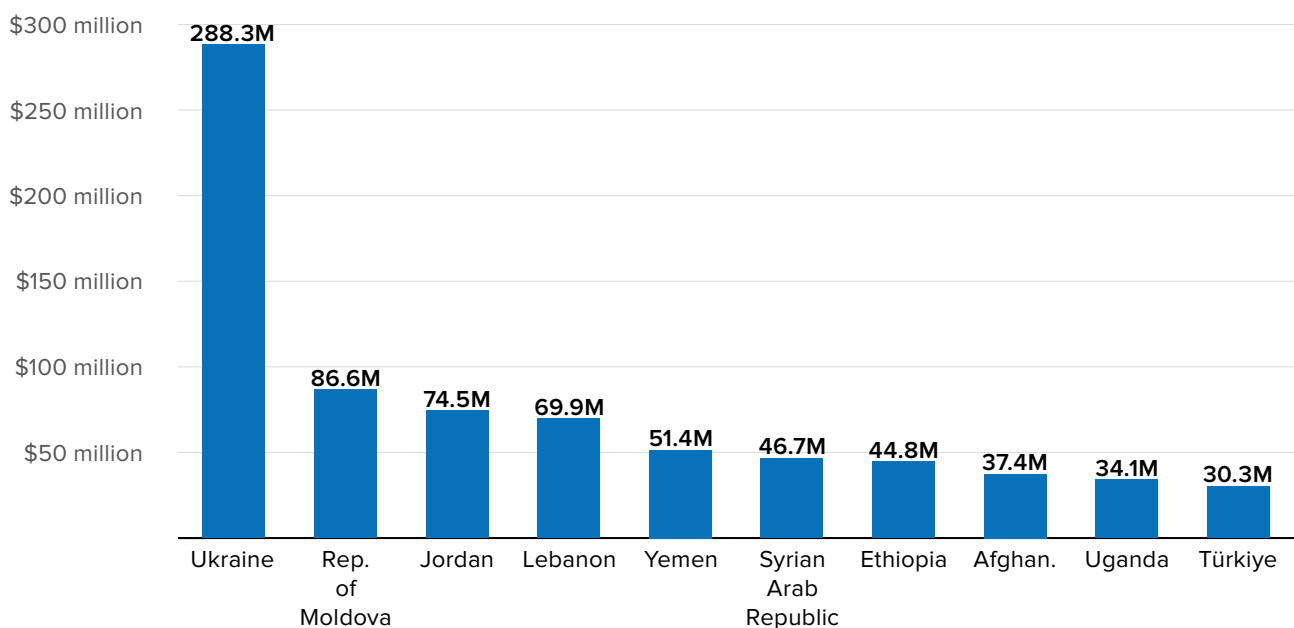
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Well-being and basic needs: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **63%** of **\$1.203 billion** global expenditure in 2023.





Outcome Area 9

UNHCR helped Nadiia repair her house in Myrne village, near the Ukrainian city of Kherson. She and her family fled following the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. When they returned, they found their house had been damaged by fire, the walls were ruined and the ceiling destroyed. © UNHCR/Alina Kovalenko

Sustainable housing and settlements

Results in 2023



In 2023, UNHCR provided shelter and housing assistance to displaced populations in **67 countries**. More than **2.9 million individuals** received vital shelter assistance in various forms, including emergency, transitional or durable shelter, shelter repairs or upgrades, as well as cash grants or vouchers for rental subsidies or shelter materials.

UNHCR's biggest investment was in **Ukraine**, where it reached 172,000 people with emergency shelter kits, repaired 22,000 homes and provided accommodation for 15,200 people. In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, UNHCR provided emergency shelter to 104,915 people and disposed of 52,626 cubic metres of debris – benefiting almost 250,000 people, while the UNHCR-led shelter sector repaired 2,270 damaged houses. As people fled **Sudan** and arrived in eastern **Chad**, UNHCR installed 2,724 refugee housing units and 56,300 emergency shelters to accommodate 236,100 new refugees.

A majority of refugees and asylum-seekers had **habitable and affordable housing** in only 11 of the 39 countries for which UNHCR operations reported data in 2023, a decrease from 17 out of 41 countries in 2022. There was a marginal improvement in housing for internally displaced people (IDPs), but from a low base: six out of 18 countries reported favourable housing situations, up from four in 2022. In the countries reporting, an estimated 39% of refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs resided in habitable and affordable housing, a slight improvement from 36% in 2022, suggesting incremental but modest progress, largely due to lack of funds and continuous new emergencies like the Sudan situation.

In addition to direct shelter assistance, UNHCR prioritized communal facilities and infrastructure, providing or maintaining **698 communal facilities** such as health and education centres and developing or maintaining **325 km of roads and drainage** infrastructure, ensuring access to essential

services and mitigating the risks posed by floods and other disasters.

In **Sudan**, the huge scale of displacement forced UNHCR to shift its shelter strategy towards emergency support. It assisted 168,420 individuals, providing emergency shelter kits, tents and cash assistance. Millions of displaced Sudanese resided in host communities or overcrowded collective centres. UNHCR built tents in an effort to decongest such sites and carried out mapping and assessments to ensure that its programmes were targeted in a way that addressed shelter needs effectively.

UNHCR's shelter and settlement work also reinforced countries' **efforts to include refugees in national systems**. **Niger**, for example, made a pledge at the Global Refugee Forum 2023 to build refugee housing as part of a wider national poverty reduction strategy, and called on donors to help it house 49,000 more refugees by 2027, in addition to 40,000 covered by a 2019 pledge. By the end of 2023, UNHCR had provided housing assistance to 14,887 households, 68% of them refugees, 18% returnees and vulnerable host community members, and 14 % IDPs.

In **Kenya**, the Government announced the "**Shirika Plan**", which aims to enhance the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers by transitioning from camps to integrated settlements, thereby alleviating the pressure on host communities and reducing aid dependency by replacing humanitarian-led service delivery with government systems. The Kenyan Government designated **Kakuma and Dadaab** as municipalities, marking a crucial step in this transformative process. The solution-oriented approach holds great potential as a model beyond the borders of Kenya. In Kakuma, UNHCR constructed 357 permanent houses through its programme of cash based interventions, ensuring that local materials and capacity were used, with the shelter partner ensuring quality and UNHCR identifying the land. This, in addition to the construction of 2,599 transitional shelters, helped to provide shelter solutions for households who had been waiting in reception centres to be settled in the community.

As set out in its "**Operational strategy for climate resilience and environmental sustainability**", UNHCR made efforts to promote **environmental conservation**, planting over 2,500 hectares of land and contributing to ecosystem restoration initiatives. Under the **Geneva Technical Hub (GTH)**, a significant milestone was achieved with the launch of the **UNHCR Shelter Sustainability Assessment Tool**, which enables comprehensive assessments of shelter designs, incorporating environmental impacts alongside other technical performance criteria such as habitability and affordability. Designed to inform decisions on the procurement of emergency, transitional and durable shelters, this tool is open to all humanitarian shelter practitioners, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the sector.

As part of its shelter work, UNHCR also aims to improve the **lighting** in places where forcibly displaced people live. The need for investment grew in 2023, as 49% of refugees in the 32 countries where UNHCR collected data did not have sufficient energy for lighting. Over 525,000 solar lamps were distributed to new arrivals, complemented by the installation of solar streetlights to bolster communal protection along roads and facilities.

Improvements in lighting owed much to the private sector **solar power** market. Among refugee communities in **Ethiopia**, for example, the availability of household lighting grew from 33% to 42% in 2023 thanks to the introduction of market-based solar home systems. In **Rwanda**, 10,100 refugee households were supported in acquiring solar home systems from private companies, although most refugees still did not have enough electricity for lighting or small appliances.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

People who have been forced to flee often face restrictions when they want to move into more permanent homes, which perpetuates the cycle of emergency support. Temporary settlements may also be the only option when people are displaced in a remote area, and this can also lead to reliance on temporary shelters. But using temporary infrastructure and shelters leaves people more vulnerable to climate-related risks and prevents the achievement of sustainable outcomes.

Access to lighting requires sustainable solutions that can be maintained over the long term, particularly in refugee settlements where resources are limited. Despite the involvement of the private sector, there is a lack of funding, and it is difficult to carry out operation and maintenance plans with limited skilled personnel, which reduces lasting improvements.

© UNHCR/Ying Hu



Better Shelter provides emergency shelters for refugees and displaced people in Chad, Syria and Türkiye

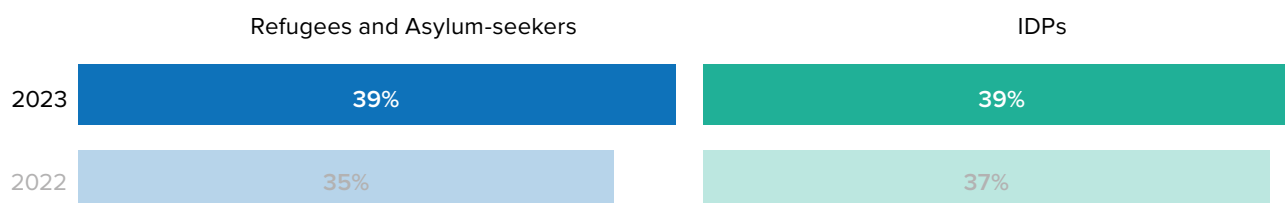
Swedish humanitarian non-profit organization Better Shelter supports UNHCR's shelter efforts with relief housing units (RHUs), which ensure the safety and dignity of those forced to flee.

In 2023, thanks to support from the IKEA Foundation and other partners, Better Shelter donated 3,000 RHUs for Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad and more than 1,400 RHUs in response to the earthquakes that struck the north-west Syria and Türkiye in February 2023.

Core indicators



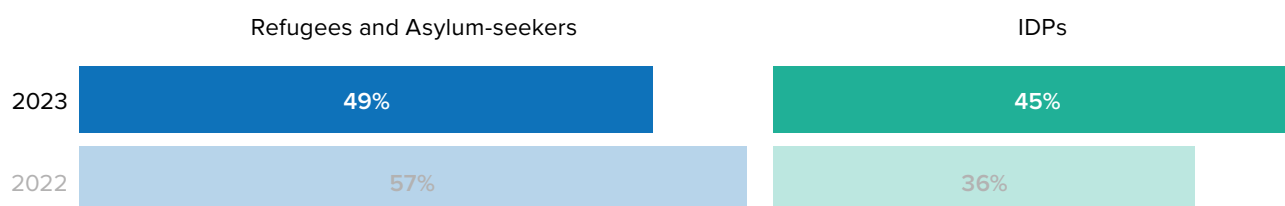
9.1 Proportion of people living in habitable and affordable housing



Number of countries reporting: in 2023, 39 countries reported on refugees and asylum-seekers and 18 on IDPs; in 2022, 41 countries reported on refugees and asylum-seekers and 18 on IDPs.



9.2 Proportion of people that have energy to ensure lighting



Number of countries reporting: in 2023, 32 countries reported on refugees and asylum-seekers and 11 on IDPs; in 2022, 35 countries reported on refugees and asylum-seekers and 13 on IDPs.

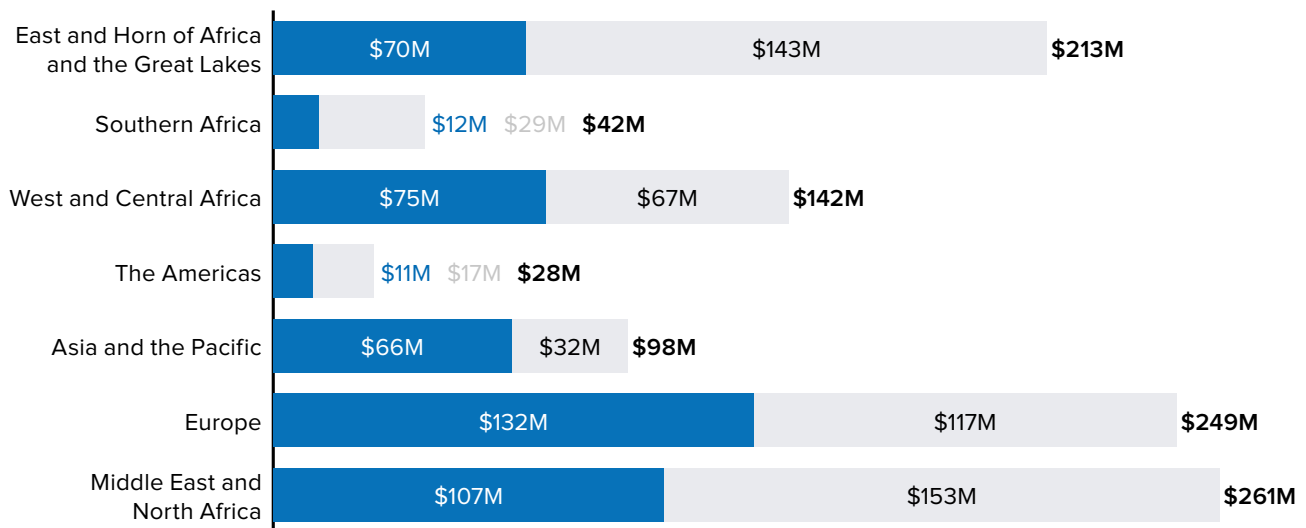
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Sustainable housing and settlements

\$478 million spent against a budget of **\$1.037 billion**
\$559 million of unmet needs or **54%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Sustainable housing and settlements

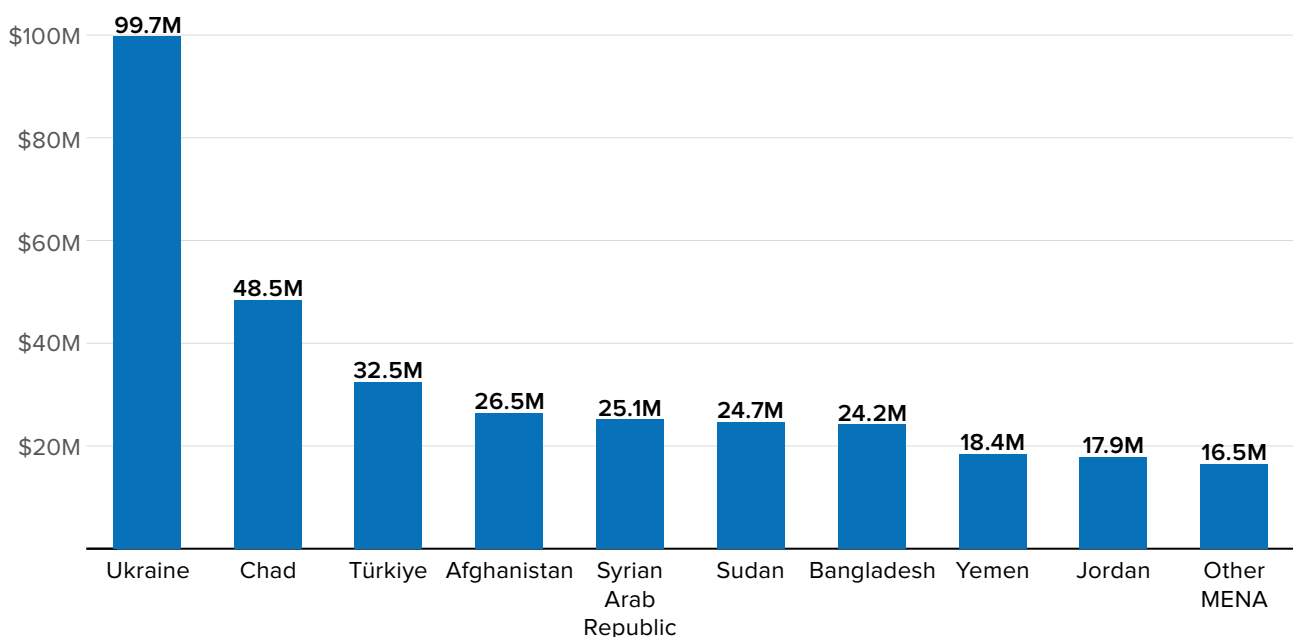
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Sustainable housing and settlements: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **70%** of **\$478 million** global expenditure in 2023.



Other MENA = Other operations in the Middle East and North Africa



Outcome Area 10

In Kenya's Kalobeyei settlement, Sabina, a community health volunteer, uses a MUAC assessment to check Regina's young daughter for signs of malnutrition. "It's important for refugees and host communities to be supported so that they can stand on their own," says Sabina, who tends to the health care needs of both the refugee and the host community. © UNHCR/Charity Nzomo

Healthy lives

Results in 2023



People who have been forced to flee or who are stateless are among the most vulnerable groups in the world. Their physical and mental health is at risk due

to the dangers and stresses that they experience, and yet they often face obstacles in getting care because of their legal and economic situation. In 2023, UNHCR worked with governments and partners to provide emergency health services, strengthen local health services and include refugees in national health systems and plans.

Overall, the health situation for refugees remained relatively stable in 2023 although there was an increase in outbreaks reported, mostly in Africa, and challenges remained in reaching childhood vaccination targets and in delivering adequate services in new emergencies such as in Sudan.

Over **14 million people** benefited from UNHCR-supported health services in 2023, compared to 12 million in 2022. In the 19 countries using the UNHCR integrated Refugee Health Information System, the average crude mortality rate was stable at 0.09 deaths/1,000/month.

The under-five mortality rate (U5MR) declined to 0.16 deaths/1,000/month compared to 0.24 in 2022. However, in Sudan the U5MR exceeded thresholds (> 2 deaths/10,000/day) due to malnutrition and measles outbreaks. The main causes of deaths globally were malaria (20%), neonatal conditions (7%), lower respiratory tract infections (6%), cardiovascular diseases (5%) and anaemia (4%).

Increasing the uptake of **skilled delivery at birth** is fundamental to improving maternal and neonatal health. The skilled birth attendance rate remained stable at 93%. 69% of reporting countries met the target of 90%, a small increase from 68% in 2022. Actions to improve maternal and child health were supported through facility- and community-based interventions, including 11,494 community health workers (54% women, 46% men) funded, equipped, and trained with the support of UNHCR.

Despite improvements in some countries, **childhood vaccination coverage** remained below target. Only 29% of countries achieved more than 95% measles coverage. In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (DRC), UNHCR supported measles and polio catch-up campaigns that achieved coverage of over 95%. In **Bangladesh**, community health workers increased

the proportion of stateless Rohingya children vaccinated with a second dose of measles vaccine from 36% to 71%, but further action is needed.

Increased **disease outbreaks** have been reported due to low vaccination coverage and the impacts of climate change. Results from the [public health annual survey](#) show that 76% of country operations reported at least one outbreak, compared to 63% in 2022, and there were 21 measles outbreaks reported, compared to 14 in 2022. UNHCR and partners responded to outbreaks of measles, cholera, malaria, dengue, polio and Hepatitis E in 2023.

Data from the [Standardized Expanded Nutrition Surveys](#) from 116 refugee settlements in 18 countries showed that only 50% of the settlements met the **global acute malnutrition (GAM)** standard of <10%. 28% had a GAM prevalence 10-15% (serious) and 22% were above the emergency threshold of ≥15% (critical). The **Sudan** crisis led to a dramatic situation with SAM admissions increasing eightfold and 1 in 3 children arriving in neighbouring countries malnourished. The crisis also led to high mental health needs among displaced populations. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) capacity was thus strengthened, including in **Chad**, through [surge support](#). Through inter-agency collaboration, the [Minimum Service Package for MHPSS](#) was introduced to **Pakistan and Ethiopia**.

UNHCR's biannual **public health inclusion** survey in 50 countries indicated that of 49 countries with national health plans and policies, 80% included refugees in those plans and policies. Refugees had access to national primary health care facilities in all surveyed countries, and in 92% of countries, their access was subject to the same conditions as nationals. 49 of the 50 countries reported that refugees could access national secondary and tertiary care facilities, and in 44 countries they had equal access with nationals. 64% of countries had a social health insurance scheme, with 47% of those including refugees.

UNHCR continued collaboration with UNICEF, WFP, WHO, FAO and others to reduce **childhood wasting**. Five priority actions linked to the [Global Action Plan on child wasting](#) commenced in 15 highly affected countries which host over 4.6 million refugees.

Outcomes included therapeutic and supplementary feeding for approximately 230,000 malnourished children.

UNHCR, WFP and UNAIDS co-led multistakeholder action to reactivate the [Inter-Agency Task team](#) for **HIV** in humanitarian emergencies. In the DRC this led to joint efforts to strengthen evidence and advocacy for improving HIV programming.

UNHCR and WHO co-convened the [Group of Friends of Health for Refugees and Host Communities](#) comprising governments, international organizations, and civil society. The Group announced two **multi-stakeholder pledges** on [health inclusion](#) and [MHPSS](#) at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF), backed by over 230 pledges that are expected to drive progress in strengthening national health systems.

UNHCR and [Queen Margaret University](#) commenced a three-year study on factors enabling inclusion in health systems. Furthermore, a group of 10 academic partners developed a Global Refugee Forum pledge to extend their expertise to refugee health through research, advocacy, and educational initiatives, including scholarships for refugees. The UNHCR-World Bank Joint Data Center supported **Malawi** to include refugees in the national demographic and health survey (DHS), an important means to assess the health status and needs of refugees.

In **Mauritania**, the World Bank and UNHCR facilitated integrating refugees into the national health system, a transition from NGO-run services to the Ministry of Health. In Chad, the World Bank supported the national health system to respond to the influx of Sudanese refugees, providing support for additional staff, ambulances, and medicines.

UNHCR collaborated with the ILO on assessing the feasibility of including refugees in national social health protection systems in **Egypt, Ethiopia, and Kenya**.

UNHCR's partnership with the World Diabetes Foundation significantly improved **noncommunicable disease** care for refugees and host communities in **Burundi, Sudan, and the United Republic of Tanzania** through capacity-building of staff and health system strengthening.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

Underfunding severely constrained efforts to ensure access to comprehensive essential preventive and curative care, leading to suboptimal vaccination coverage and reduced support for national health systems in the face of new emergencies, worsening effects of climate change, outbreaks, and greater needs. This included limited provision of medicines and resources for referrals for hospital care. In countries like Sudan, insecurity severely hindered access to those in need.

Progress towards greater inclusion in national health and social health protection systems is often hindered by inadequate financial support to low- and middle-income countries. Some progress has been made through development partnerships, but sustained financing is crucial for meaningful progress.

Multisectoral monitoring results



Essential healthcare services

14.6 million people received essential healthcare services (77 reporting countries)

2022 result: 12 million people (85 reporting countries)



Sexual and reproductive health services*

1.5 million women and girls received sexual and reproductive health services (51 reporting countries)*

2022 result: 994,000 women and girls (57 reporting countries)

*Sexual and reproductive health services include antenatal care, assisted delivery, postnatal care, family planning services and health services for survivors of gender-based violence.



Mental health and psychosocial support

1.3 million people received mental health and psychosocial support services (99 reporting countries)

2022 result: 1.1 million people (82 reporting countries)



Nutrition

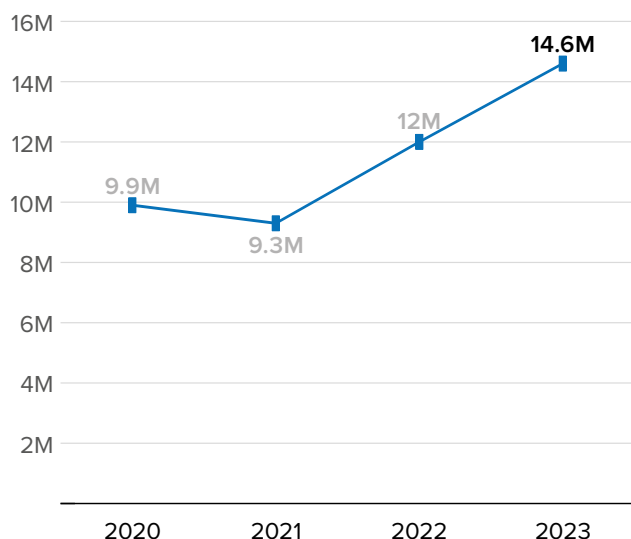
191,000 children 6-59 months were admitted for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) (33 reporting countries)

2022 result: 140,000 people (37 reporting countries)

95,000 children 6-59 months were admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in 34 reporting countries

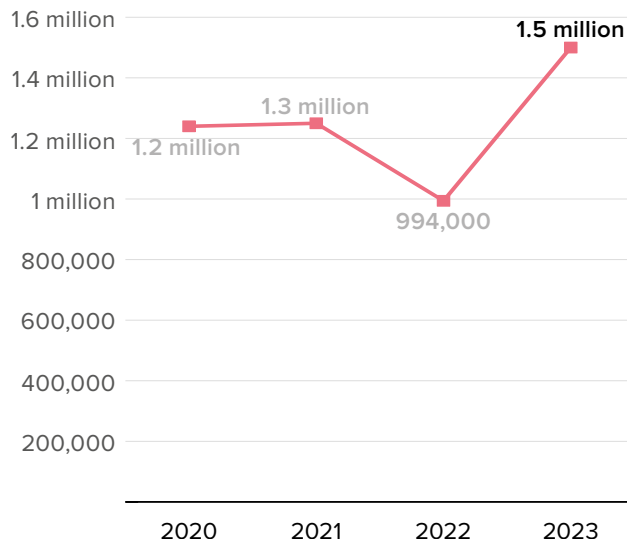
2022 result: 72,500 children in 37 countries

Number of people who received essential healthcare services | 2020-2023



Number of countries reporting: 68 countries in 2020, 79 in 2021, 85 countries in 2022 and 77 in 2023.

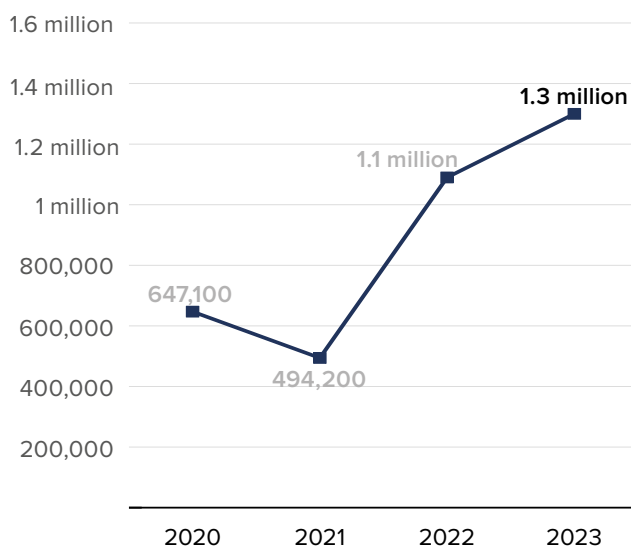
Number of women and girls who received sexual and reproductive health services | 2020-2023



1) Sexual and reproductive health services include antenatal care, assisted delivery, postnatal care, family planning services and health services for survivors of gender-based violence.

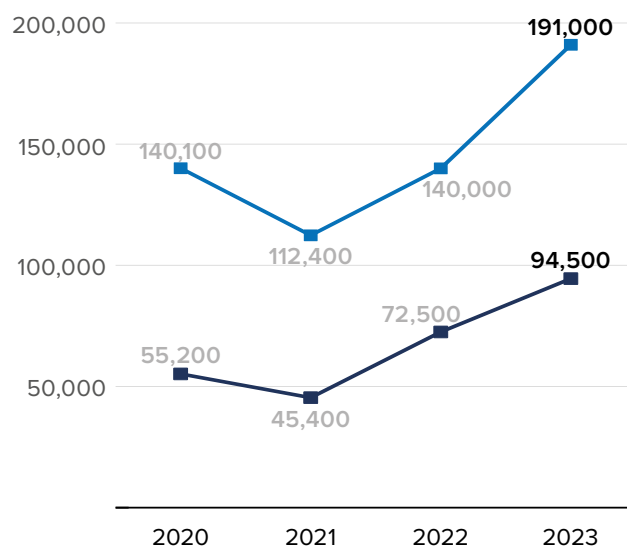
2) Number of countries reporting: 51 countries in 2020, 50 in 2021, 57 in 2022 and 51 in 2023.

Number of people who received mental health and psychological support services | 2020-2023

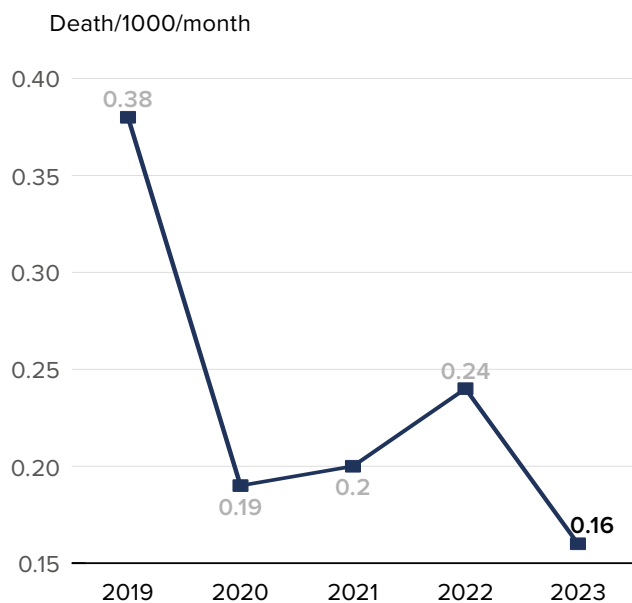


Number of children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) | 2020-2023

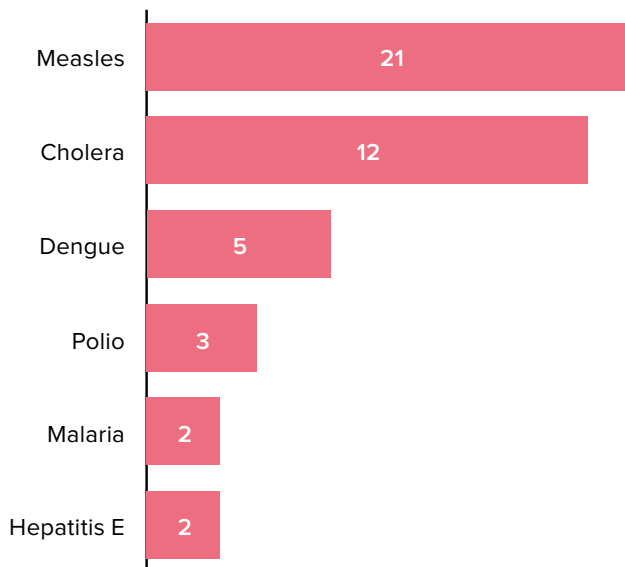
■ Number of children admitted for treatment of MAM
■ Number of children admitted for treatment of SAM



Under five mortality rate | 2019-2023



Main outbreaks reported in refugee sites in 2023



A new health center in Valle de Jesús, Guatemala, supported by UNHCR, provides essential care for refugees and locals, including mothers like Doña Blanca and her newborn. Part of the “Cities of Solidarity” initiative, it fosters integration amid rising asylum seekers. In 2022, UNHCR assisted over 150,000 people with vital services. © UNHCR/Victor Sánchez Mejía



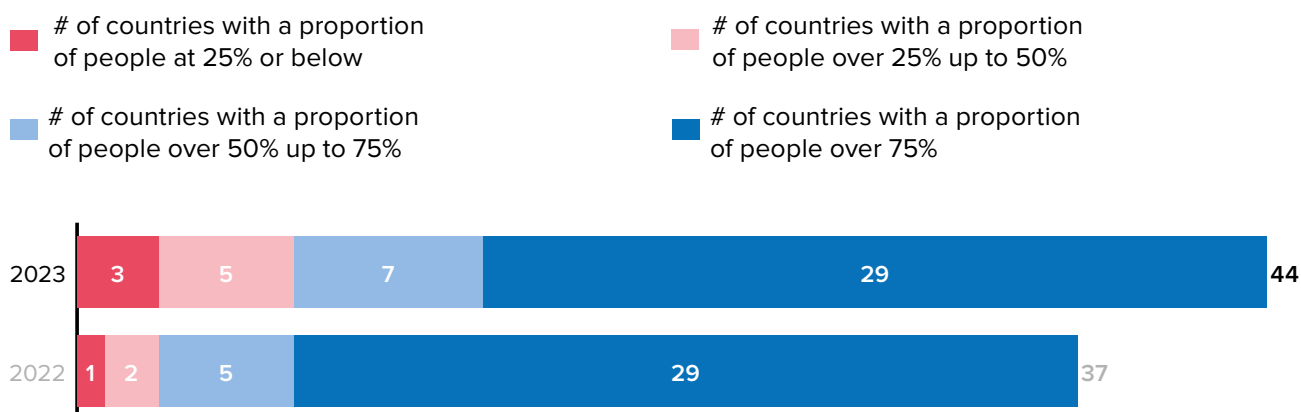
Core indicators



10.1 Proportion of children aged 9 months to five years who have received measles vaccination (%)

29% of reporting countries achieved a target of > 95% measles vaccine coverage in children aged 9 month – 5 years.

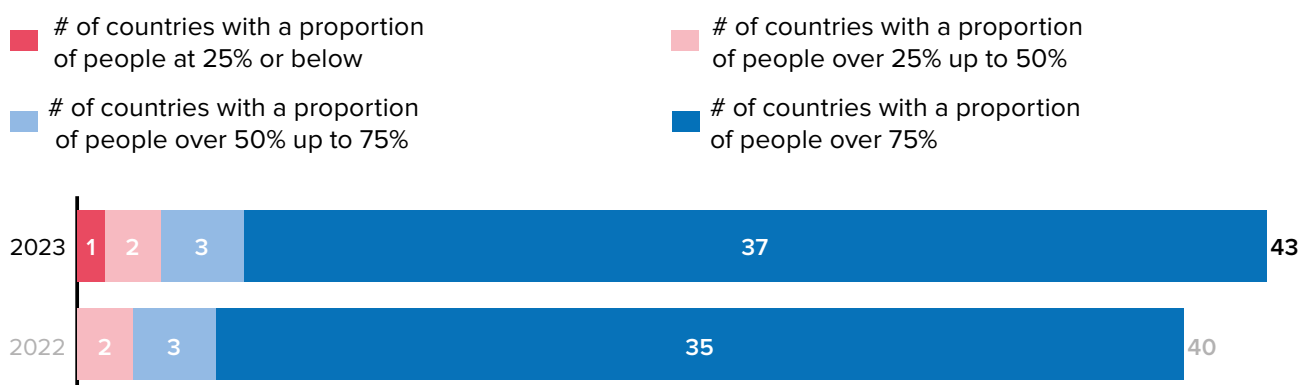
2022 result: 30% of countries



10.2. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)

69% of reporting countries achieved the target of > 90% births attended by skilled health personnel.

2022 result: 68% of countries



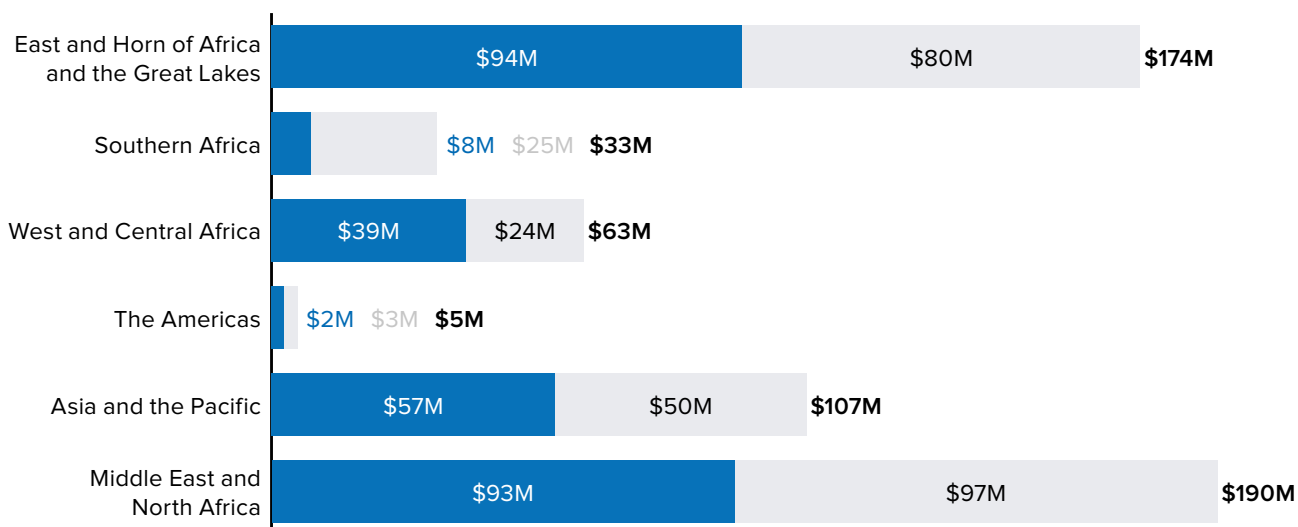
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Healthy lives

\$299 million spent against a budget of **\$578 million**
\$279 million of unmet needs or **48%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Healthy lives

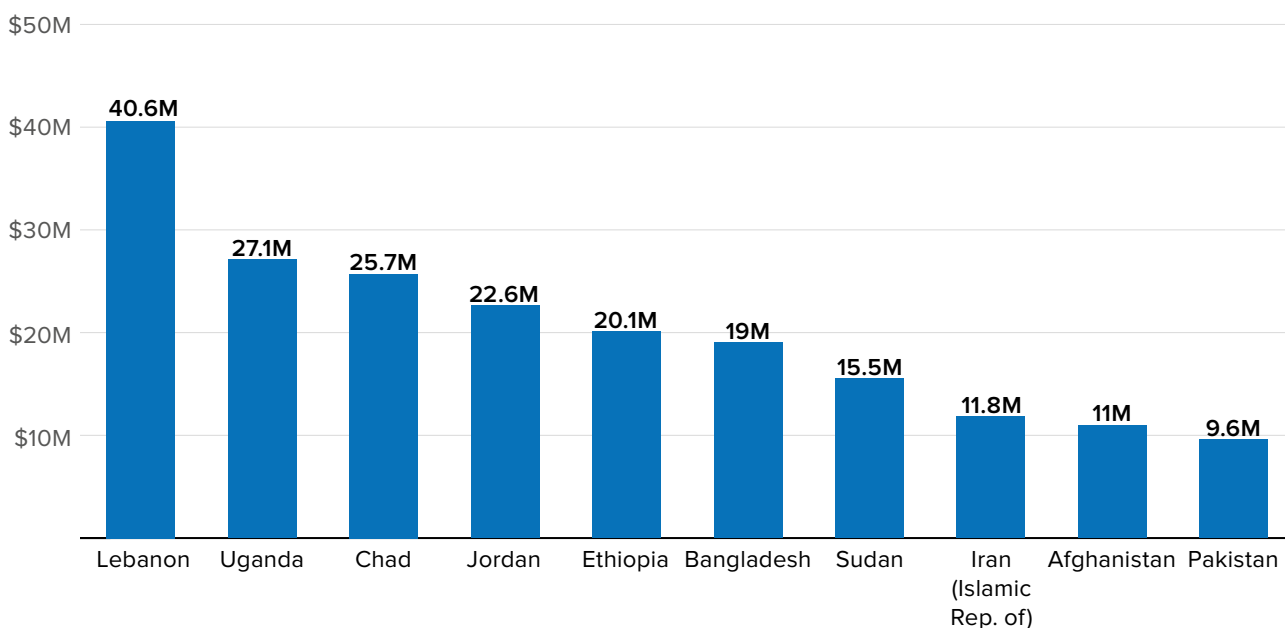
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Healthy lives: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **68%** of **\$299 million** global expenditure in 2023.





© UNHCR/Samuel Othman



Novo Nordisk and Grundfos Foundations support inclusive health in Kenya

The Novo Nordisk Foundation and the Grundfos Foundation [pledged \\$9 million](#) in 2023 to help develop a more inclusive and sustainable health system in Kenya's Turkana County, where the Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyei settlement are set to be integrated into the national health system. The partnership will improve healthcare staffing, set up dedicated clinics for non-communicable diseases integrated into primary health facilities, and ensure these facilities have access to sustainable water and sanitation services.

Refugees and host communities will benefit from better quality health services and will enjoy better health as a result. The collaboration is part of the new [Inclusive Refugee Response Partnership](#) led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.



Education

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

UNHCR's primary focus is on ensuring the **equitable and sustainable integration** of refugee, asylum-seeker and stateless children and youth into national education systems. The Global Compact on Refugees "[Indicator report 2023](#)" found, based on data from 51 countries, that 73% of countries had laws allowing refugees to access national primary education systems. However, legal rights did not always translate to access in practice, with the same

UNHCR acts as a convener towards greater enabling environments, and ensuring children and youth are able to **overcome de facto barriers to attending school**. UNHCR and UNESCO made the case for the inclusion of refugees in national education systems in a joint evidence-based report, “[Paving pathways](#)

for inclusion”. Progress has been observed at the country level: in **Kenya**, where 107 UNHCR-managed schools serve around 145,000 children, policy changes toward refugee integration have attracted funds from the World Bank and GPE, supporting refugee education. The roll-out of the [Refugee Education Integration Policy](#) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq resulted in a 20% uptick in enrolment among **Syrian** refugee children in grades 1 to 4.

Primary and tertiary education have made significant progress. In 2023, UNHCR successfully concluded the fourth phase of the UNHCR-[Educate A Child](#) (EAC) Programme supported by the Education Above All Foundation, Qatar, with 419,815 out-of-school refugee children enrolled in primary education across 14 countries within the multi-year programme cycle. The Primary Impact Programme was launched in 16 countries, an initiative to increase access to primary education.

In 2023, the global [tertiary enrolment rate](#) for refugees rose to 7%, up from 1% in 2019, a slow but steady advancement towards the goal of achieving 15% enrolment of refugee youth in **higher education** by 2030. The Global Refugee Forum [multi-stakeholder pledge on higher education for self-reliance](#) encompasses a range of needs and contributions associated to the 15by30 target, including scholarships, academic guidance, testing fee waivers, digital education facilities, language and skills training, complementary education pathways, student solidarity actions and more.

UNHCR and a coalition of partners issued the first global report on [15by30](#), which stresses the need for additional **support to host country higher education institutions** and refugee-youth-led initiatives to expand post-secondary education pathways for refugees, including through technical and vocational training and online degree programmes. The **DAFI scholarship programme** is the foundation for UNHCR's higher education approaches and supported 9,312 refugee students in 59 countries in 2023. The DAFI programme was the subject of an [evaluation](#) published in 2023.

Data and evidence in education was also strengthened in 2023. More than 70 countries contributed data to the 2023 edition of UNHCR's annual "[Refugee education report](#)", an almost 50% increase compared to 2022.

UNHCR also contributed significantly to the literature on forced displacement in education, including our work on "[Building the evidence on forced displacement](#)" with the **World Bank** and other partners, and a series of global public goods summarized in the UNHCR "[Education briefs](#)".

UNHCR's partnership with the [Vodafone Foundation](#)-funded **Instant Network Schools** programme benefited over 80,606 students and 3,886 teachers in six countries in 2023: the **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Kenya, Mozambique, South Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania**. The partnership also [announced an expansion](#) of the programme, which has reached 274,288 children and 4,705 teachers since its inception in 2013. Additionally, UNHCR's collaboration with [ProFuturo](#) in **Rwanda, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe** helped over 25,000 children and nearly 1,000 teachers in 2023. Vodafone and ProFuturo were among the backers of a GRF multi-stakeholder [pledge](#) to increase refugees' access to quality connected education through the Refugee Connected Education Challenge.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

At the start of 2023, UNHCR requested \$466 million to continue supporting the education of refugee children and other forcibly displaced and stateless people. However, UNHCR received only around half of the requested funding. The chronic shortfall in education funding is expected to increase the number of refugee children out of school, potentially creating significant challenges in individual and community human development and adversely affecting their future prospects.

Furthermore, refugee inclusion into national education systems has proved challenging due to lack of financial support and resources to system strengthening which is required to meet positive policy shifts. Predictable multi-year financing or programme support, which benefits both refugee and host communities, is essential, particularly in lower and lower-middle-income host countries. There is a long way to go to meet the [World Bank estimate](#) of \$9.3 billion a year required to include all refugees in national systems. Funding for refugee education is under immense pressure, putting the futures of some of the world's most vulnerable children in jeopardy.



ProFuturo commits to transforming futures

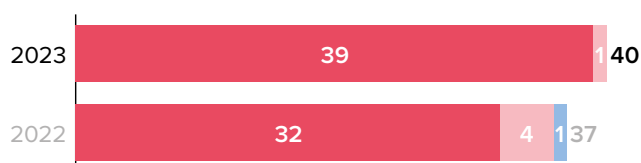
ProFuturo Foundation [in Spanish] has reaffirmed its commitment to the Connected Education Project led by UNHCR in Nigeria, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. The project aims to bridge the education gap between refugee and non-refugee populations with technology. In 2023 alone, 586 teachers across 24 schools in the three countries received ProFuturo's training. As a result, these educators have revolutionized learning by integrating digital activities and innovative methodologies into their classrooms, significantly improving student engagement.

ProFuturo also played a pivotal role in the Global Refugee Forum by pledging, alongside other actors, towards expanding connected education for refugees through the Refugee Connected Education Challenge.

Core indicators



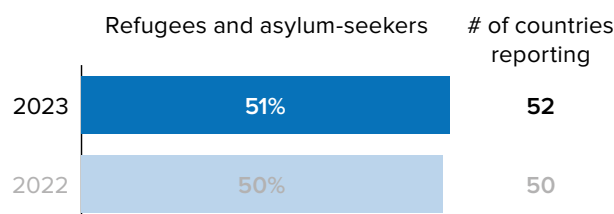
11.1 Proportion of young people enrolled in tertiary and higher education



- # of countries with a proportion of people at 25% or below
- # of countries reporting with a proportion of people over 50% up to 75%
- # of countries with a proportion of people over 25% up to 50%



11.2 Proportion of children and young people enrolled in the national education system



Nanji Family Foundation helps refugee students aim higher

The Nanji Family Foundation commemorated the 50th anniversary of the family's [exile from Uganda](#), along with tens of thousands of other South Asians expelled in 1972, by pledging \$1 million over four years towards UNHCR's [Aiming Higher](#) campaign.

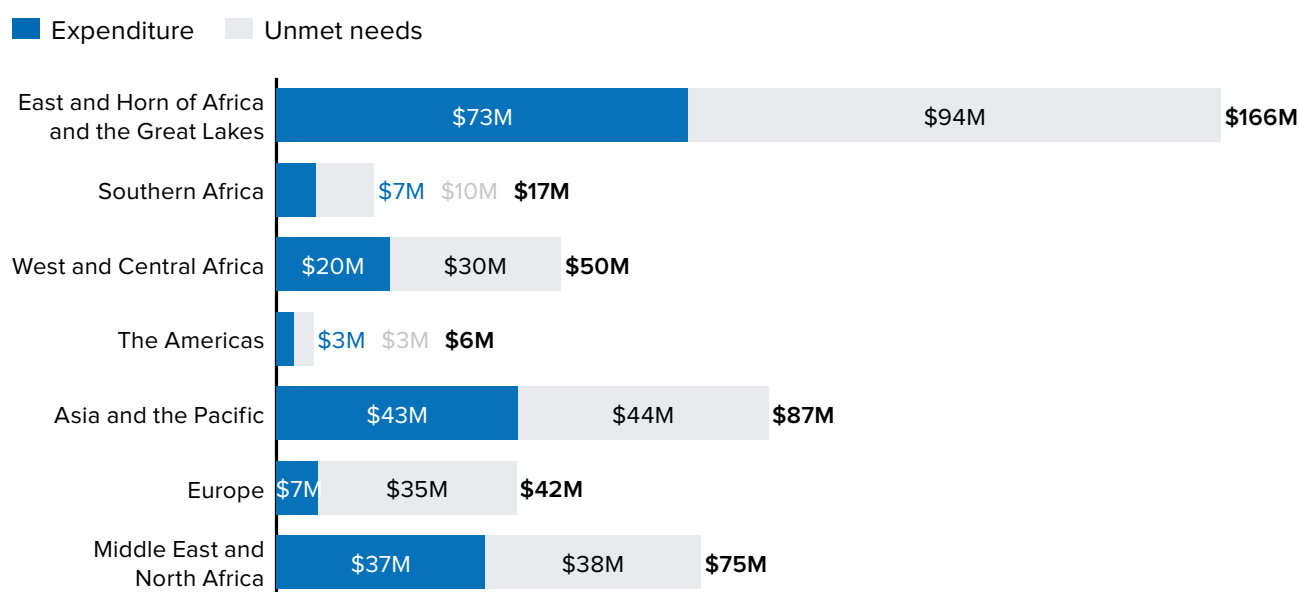
2023 was the second year in the partnership, which is funding scholarships for over 50 refugees seeking health-related university studies, including career training, internships, mentoring, and volunteering and networking opportunities. Supporting refugees' higher learning has been a long-held aspiration of the foundation, as well as encouraging others to similarly support opportunities for displaced youth.

Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Education

\$211 million spent against a budget of **\$478 million**
\$267 million of unmet needs or **56%** of the budget

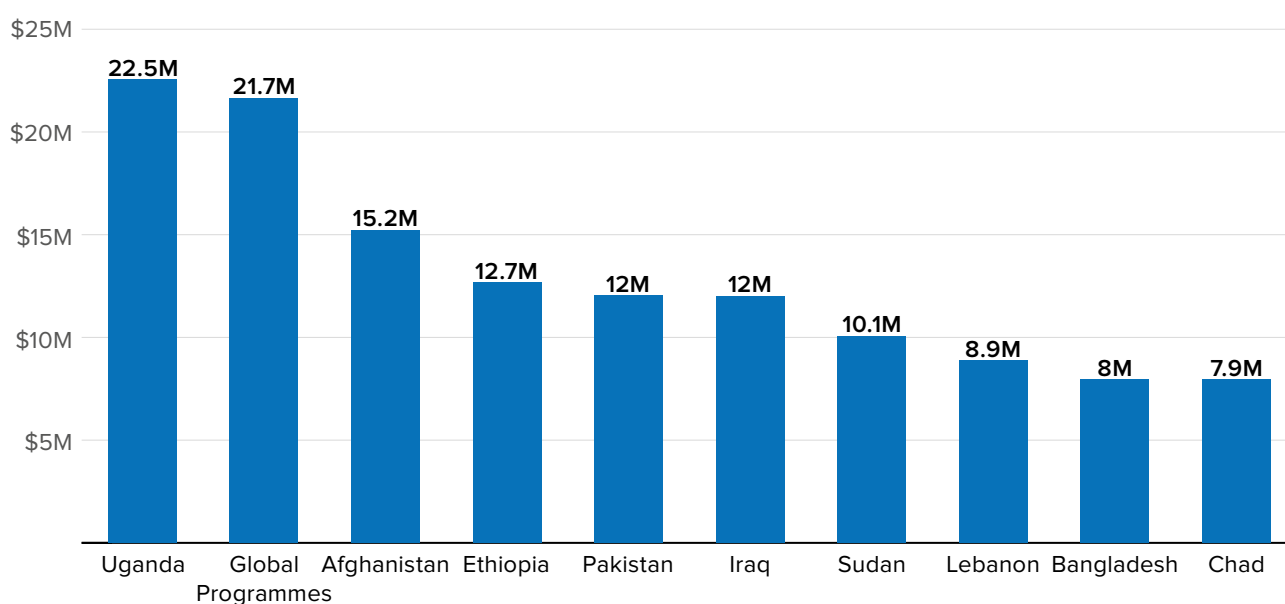
Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Education



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Education: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **62%** of **\$211 million** global expenditure in 2023.





Outcome Area 12

Angelique Shase, 13, washes her face at the water point in Rubondo, in Nakivale refugee settlement in Uganda, where water is still a big need. UNHCR is working to make water, sanitation and hygiene services accessible to refugees and host community members, but the continued arrival of refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, is putting pressure on natural resources, including water, that are already stretched thin. © UNHCR/Esther Ruth Mbabazi

Clean water, sanitation and hygiene

Results in 2023



In 2023, UNHCR provided water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in new emergencies and in protracted displacement situations, and advocated on behalf of forcibly displaced people and their host communities for their inclusion in local services and national development plans. In line with its “[Operational strategy for climate resilience and environmental sustainability](#)” and the Global Compact for Refugees, UNHCR continued to develop climate resilient and inclusive WASH services.

UNHCR delivered **WASH services in 29 countries**. 84% of the refugee population in these countries had access to at least basic drinking water services ([SDG 6.1.1](#)), a slight improvement from an estimated 81% in 2022. UNHCR’s refugee operations provided an average of **18 litres of water per person per day**, slightly less than in 2022 and the minimum daily standard of 20 litres per person for protracted situations. The slight decrease was partially

attributable to new, large-scale displacements and the increasing risks to the quantity and quality of water resources. In **Sudan’s** refugee camps, UNHCR used water trucking and increased pumping hours, as well as upgrading pipes and solar systems, to try to keep up with the influx of secondarily displaced refugees and asylum-seekers after the outbreak of conflict in April 2023.

By the end of 2023, 50% of boreholes in UNHCR’s operations were **solarized**, up from 46% in 2022, resulting in significant environmental benefits as an estimated 32,000 tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions are avoided annually due to reduced diesel consumption. Beyond the positive environmental effects, solar solutions have lower operating costs and ensure that remote field locations are less dependent on fuel deliveries. [Project Flow](#) developed solar designs for 38 water systems and 10 healthcare facilities serving 1.36 million people in **Ethiopia, Mauritania, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan and Zambia**. Solarization of selected systems will occur in 2024, with the potential to reduce CO₂ emissions by 2,000 tons per year.

By the end of 2023, UNHCR had deployed 1,200 **smart water sensors** and 40% were installed in 10 countries, mainly in Africa. The sensors monitor groundwater and provide data to help prevent depletion of aquifers. They also support the rapid identification of leaks and technical issues, thereby minimizing water wastage. The complexities experienced in progress of the installations reflect the complexity of management of these water systems, and thus the benefit to be gained from this remote monitoring system.

Progress was made in sanitation, with an estimated 63% of refugees having access to a **safe household toilet** in 28 countries where UNHCR operates, up from 53% in 2022. In **Bangladesh**, for example, UNHCR supported the construction of 23,000 latrines, and in **Sudan**, despite the emergency, UNHCR managed to construct 1,455 emergency communal latrines and upgrade 530. However, the global proportion of refugees with access to a safe household toilet remained well below the target of at least 85%. On average, one toilet was shared by 18 people. Enhanced faecal sludge management for improved environmental outcomes continues to be developed in UNHCR operations, as in Bangladesh, where a third large-scale faecal sludge treatment plant was constructed, and in **Cameroon**, where compost from latrine sludge was used in agriculture.

In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR worked with governments, donors and development actors to support inclusion of the refugee population in the national agenda, including working with **Mozambique's** refugee agency (INAR) on geophysical studies for water supplies in Mozambique and the implementation by UNHCR and UNICEF of the utility-led “whole-of-society” **R-WASH project** in **Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia**.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

UNHCR worked consistently to provide WASH services across its operations, but there were challenges in many countries, gaps remained, and minimum standards were not universally met.

In 69% of settlements in countries where UNHCR has WASH programmes, the standard of 20 litres of water per person per day was not reached, often as a result of insufficient funding. For instance, in **Cameroon, Chad, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda**, a lack of operations and maintenance and ageing infrastructure contributed to water system inefficiencies and inadequate water supply, problems which were often compounded by new arrivals.

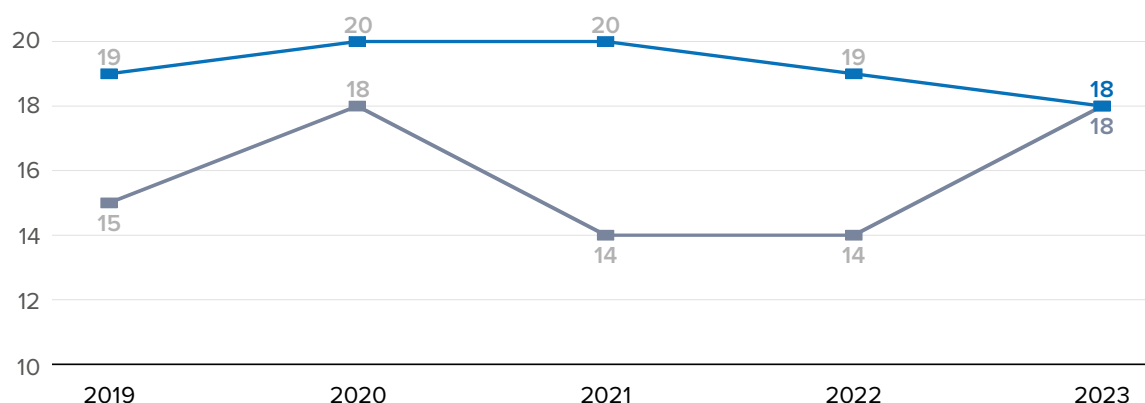
The standard of at least 85% of households with a household toilet (SDG 6.2.1) was reached in only 6% of settlements. Inadequate management of sludge in pit latrines (including untimely emptying of pits, insufficient numbers of latrines for new influxes which resulted in filling of pits significantly faster than planned, collapse of pits, etc) and diversion of resources to new displacements significantly affected this target, for instance, in **Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Malawi and Sudan**.

The lack of adequate and safe WASH facilities contributed to increased **water-related diseases**, including diarrhoea, outbreaks of cholera, and skin infections. Protection risks, particularly for women and girls, were exacerbated by the need to travel longer distances to collect water and by the gaps in private, accessible and safe sanitation facilities.

The increasing **impact of climate change**, such as floods and drought, hindered UNHCR's efforts to meet the minimum standards. During 2023, floods damaged water and sanitation infrastructure in **Cameroon, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania**, whilst increasing drought and deteriorating water quality affected the volume and quantity of water supplied to refugees in **Kenya, Nigeria, South Sudan and Uganda**.

Water supply and sanitation services (average) | 2019-2023

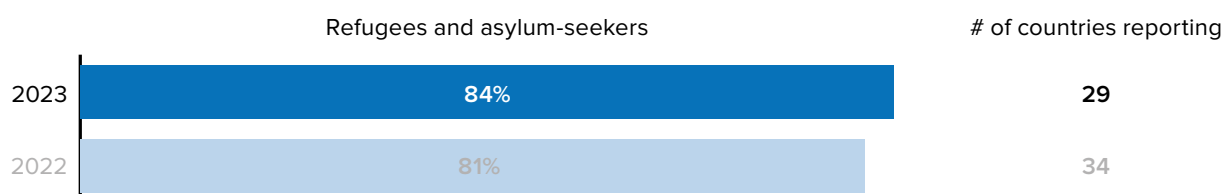
■ litres per person per day ■ persons per toilet



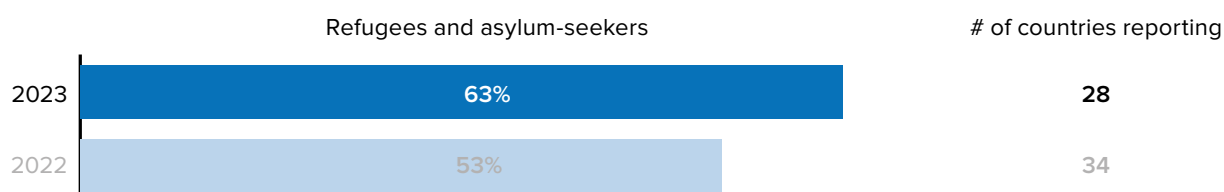
Core indicators



12.1 Proportion of people using at least basic drinking water services



12.2 Proportion of people with access to a safe household toilet



Sony Group Corporation commits to strengthening refugee health and access to safe water through Japan for UNHCR

Sony made a three-year commitment (2023-2025), contributing \$6 million from its Global Relief Fund for COVID-19 to support UNHCR in enhancing refugees' access to health, clean water, sanitation and hygiene in Bangladesh and the southern Africa region.

This will bring improvements in hygiene and health outcomes for both refugee and host communities, helping to build community resilience to the impact of future pandemics and epidemics.

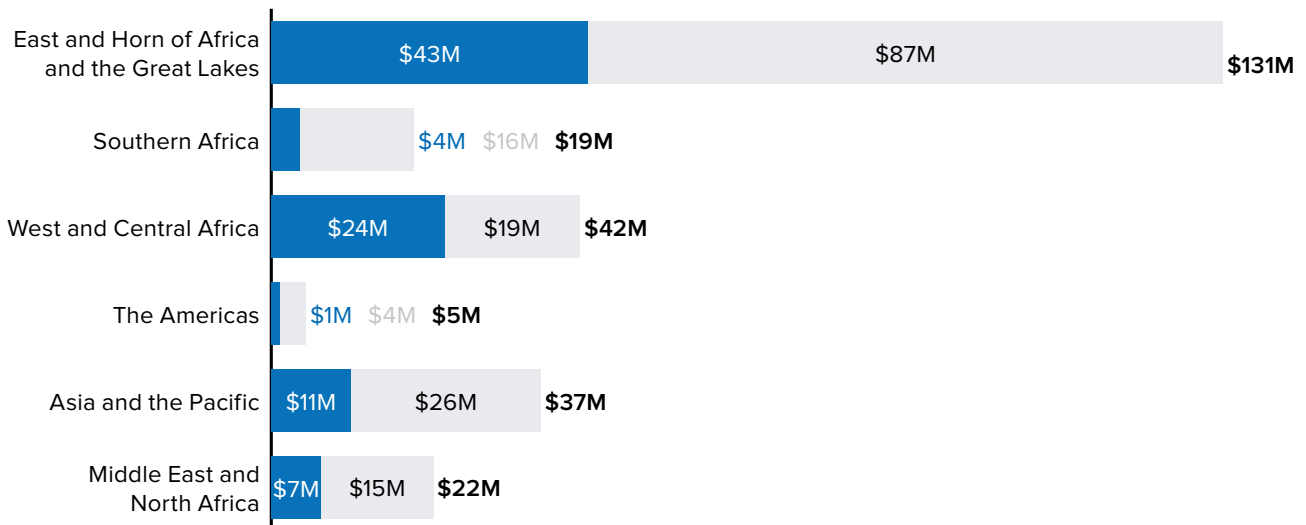
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Clean water, sanitation and hygiene

\$92 million spent against a budget of **\$258 million**
\$166 million of unmet needs or **64%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Clean water, sanitation and hygiene

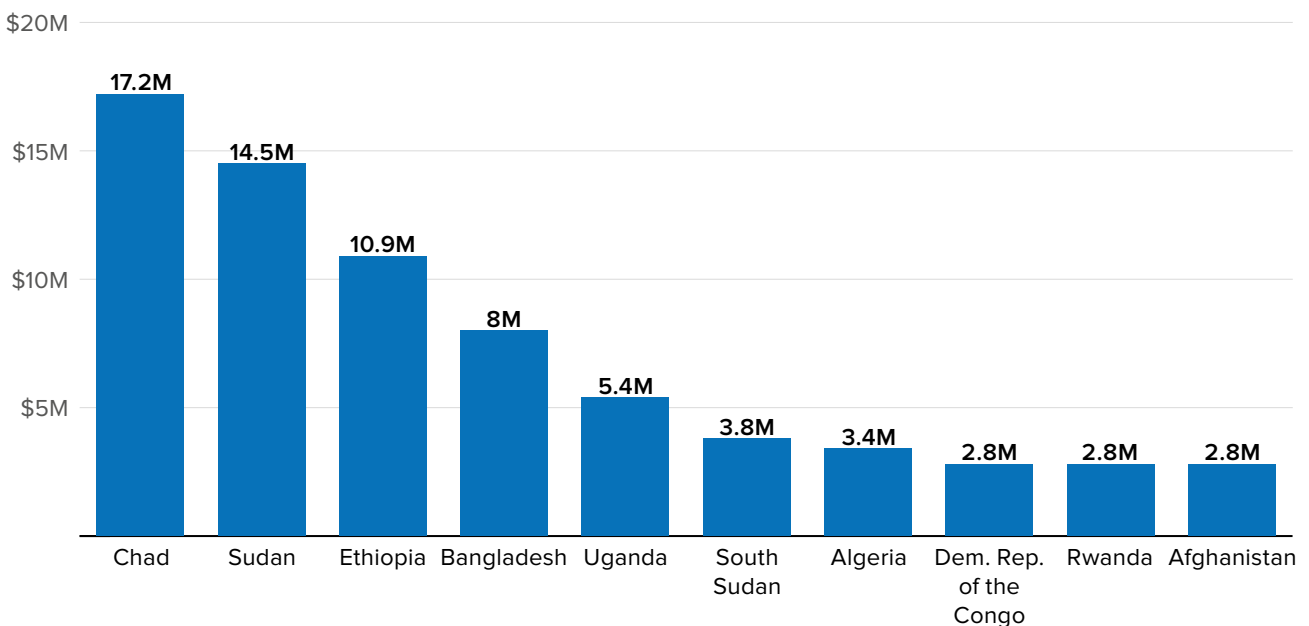
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Clean water, sanitation and hygiene: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **78%** of **\$92 million** global expenditure in 2023.



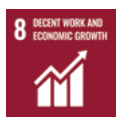


Outcome Area 13

Venezuelan couple Yeifrank (wearing mask) and Michael attended the LGBTIQ+ entrepreneurship fair in Brasília, Brazil, selling arepas, empanadas, and juices.
© UNHCR/Vanessa Beltrame

Self-reliance, economic inclusion and livelihoods

Results in 2023



Access to employment and financial services is critical to **breaking the cycle of dependency** that refugees can find themselves in when they seek safety in a foreign country. 2023 saw some significant improvements in this area. The [2023 Global Compact on Refugees “Indicator report”](#), with information on 99 countries covering 32 million refugees, showed that 67% of refugees had a **legal right to work** in 2023, up from 52% in 2021. Although only 45% had such a right in practice, according to UNHCR’s biennial [“Global survey on livelihoods and economic inclusion”](#), that represented a major improvement from 18% in 2019.

The global survey, which drew on data from 132 countries, also showed around 40% of countries offered **social protection** to refugees, and that over half of refugees globally had a legal right to open a **bank account** in the country where they had claimed asylum. Increasing numbers of countries granted that legal right. Based on reporting from 54 UNHCR country operations, 44% of refugees and asylum-seekers had an account at a bank, financial institution or mobile money service provider in 2023. That compared to 30% in 2022, based on reports from 51 countries.

Prospects for economic inclusion and social protection got a further boost at the 2023 **Global Refugee Forum**, which yielded more than 260 pledges on this theme, and more than 40 States made over 80 commitments as part of a [multi-stakeholder pledge on economic inclusion and social protection](#). Commitments from refugee-hosting States need to be matched with technical assistance and financing in order to succeed. There is growing interest among the private sector in enhancing refugee employment, as evidenced by initiatives such as the [World Economic Forum's Refugee Employment Alliance](#), co-led by UNHCR and Ingka Group, the Private Sector for Refugees initiative of the International Chamber of Commerce, and the TENT Partnership for Refugees, which UNHCR collaborates with.

Examples of economic inclusion in 2023 included UNHCR's efforts in **Uganda**, in partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister and district local governments, where 39,000 acres of arable land has been made available to about 38,500 refugee households. UNHCR-supported job-matching platforms are linking refugees with employers and integration services in several countries in Europe, Africa and the Americas, including **Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Greece, Italy, Peru and Romania**. In Romania alone, over 6,500 refugees benefited from employment support through the platform in 2023, while in Italy, the platform is connected to the Welcome network of 700 employers, who have supported over 22,000 refugees since 2017.

The Ministry of Labour of **Jordan** reported that 90,153 work permits were issued to refugees in 2023, enabling them to access social security and related benefits. Since 2016, over 430,000 work permits have been issued, including renewals, with financial support from the World Bank. Additionally, focusing on self-employment, UNHCR's partner [Jordan River Foundation](#) reported that 85% of micro-businesses supported with seed funding, mentorship and training in the period 2017-2021 remained operating after 3 years and most were profitable.

In **Ethiopia**, under the World Bank's [Economic Opportunities Program](#), 14,558 refugees out of a target of 30,000 received either a business licence, a work permit for self/wage-employment or resident permit for joint project employment. The [PROSPECTS](#) partnership, implemented by UNHCR, UNICEF, ILO, the World Bank and IFC, created economic opportunities for 129,449 people (38,621 refugees and 90,828 host community members).

In **Brazil**, UNHCR and partners assisted 9,066 refugees with job placement, self-employment, and entrepreneurship initiatives, including over 655 indigenous people, and the [Companies with Refugees Forum](#), a network of companies committed to expanding the economic inclusion of refugees, grew to over 100 members. In **Mexico**, UNHCR's local integration programme internally relocated more than 30,000 refugees and asylum seekers since 2016 and facilitated efficient matching between their profiles and workforce needs of more than 600 private sector companies. 75% of households reported at least one adult accessing employment within the first month of arrival at the destination, increasing to 90% within six months. In **El Salvador**, the "My First Job" programme provided 1,207 youth with market orientation and 698 of them obtained a formal contract, generating \$3.6 million in productivity gains for the national economy.

UNHCR developed a [global strategy](#) for livelihoods and economic inclusion for the years 2024-2030, aiming to advance economic inclusion and enhance the resilience of displaced and stateless people through decent work and access to rights and services. It serves as a blueprint for UNHCR's role within the broader economic landscape, offering diverse, context-specific approaches to economic empowerment towards self-reliance.

A shift to diversified, resilient and sustainable agroecological systems provides opportunities for the inclusion of displaced and stateless people in these systems. GRF [pledges](#) for agricultural land and policy easing support this inclusion and food security outcomes. UNHCR's participation in the [Global Network Against Food Crises](#) addresses the link between displacement and food insecurity and offers opportunities to represent refugee participation in global food systems.

A collaboration between [UNHCR and the World Bank on insect farming](#) in **Zimbabwe, Malawi, and South Sudan** offered a sustainable model for nutrition, green job creation, and waste management, with great potential for expansion to more countries in 2024. The collaboration, which began in 2022, has also led to the inclusion of refugees in regular agriculture interventions.

The [Joint WFP-UNHCR Hub for Programme Excellence and Targeting](#) helped both agencies to address the needs of forcibly displaced populations more efficiently and effectively in seven countries: **the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, South Sudan and Uganda**. In addition, WFP and UNHCR developed a joint analytical framework to assess the basic needs of displaced populations and inform programmatic interventions, including food, livelihoods/resilience, and multi-purpose cash assistance.

In **Uganda**, the [joint blended finance programme](#) established with Sida and Grameen Credit Agricole Foundation at the end of 2019 has now reached over 120,000 entrepreneurs among the refugee and host community with credit, opening of savings accounts and provision of financial education and business training services.

In 2023, the [IFC-UNHCR Joint Initiative](#) assessed financial inclusion in **Ecuador, Poland, the Republic of Moldova and Romania**, and facilitated banking sector engagement in **Poland, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova**. The Joint Initiative also aided the [IFC in launching a \\$17 million loan programme with Santander Bank Polska](#), allowing the bank to free up capital and issue \$100 million in new loans for refugee-owned and refugee-supporting businesses in **Poland**.

Despite strong evidence of progress on economic inclusion, refugees remained very vulnerable and exposed to the risk of economic downturns. In 2023, 54 UNHCR country operations gathered data on the numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers who reported a **positive change in their income** compared to the previous year. 41 reported that less than 25% of refugees and asylum-seekers reported a positive change in their income in 2023. (In 2022, 34 out of 49 countries had reported the same.) For 11 countries reporting data on internally displaced people in 2023, the results were even starker: in every country, less than a quarter of IDPs reported a positive change in their income.

© UNHCR/Charity Nemo

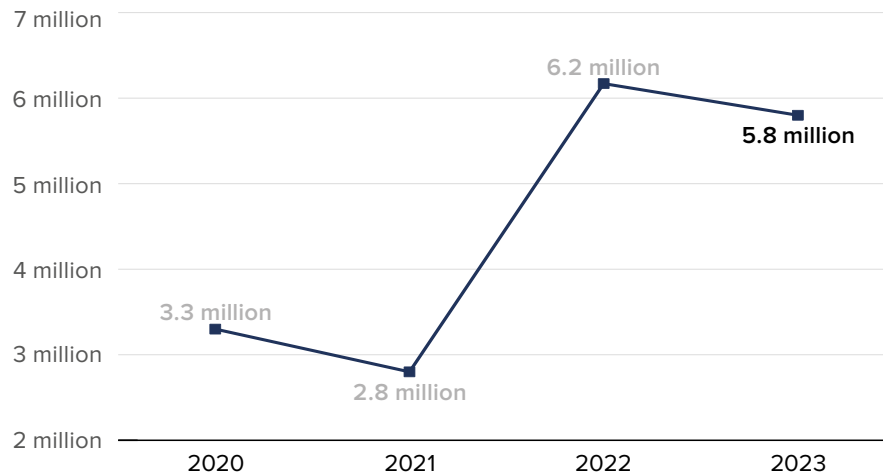


Action for refugee inclusion: the World Economic Forum and UNHCR

UNHCR and the World Economic Forum (WEF) bring governments, businesses, academia and civil society together to channel support towards refugee crises, from the moment people are forced to flee until the end of their displacement. The WEF's Humanitarian and Resilience Investing Initiative aims to

catalyse investment in frontier markets, including refugee-hosting areas. In 2023, UNHCR joined the WEF's call to action to mobilize \$10 billion in commercial and catalytic capital to enable 1,000 businesses to scale up in frontier markets by 2030. Between its launch in May 2022 and conclusion in January 2024, the Refugee Employment Alliance (co-chaired by WEF, UNHCR and Ingka Group), resulted in the direct employment of 54,000 refugees by WEF member companies and a target to secure jobs for another 125,000 refugees by 2027. The Alliance enabled like-minded businesses to learn from efforts to integrate Ukrainian refugees into the labour market and to encourage refugee employment, through best practice publications and a Strategic Intelligence Map. By joining forces, UNHCR and WEF are ensuring that the private sector's expertise, influence and resources contribute to the search for solutions.

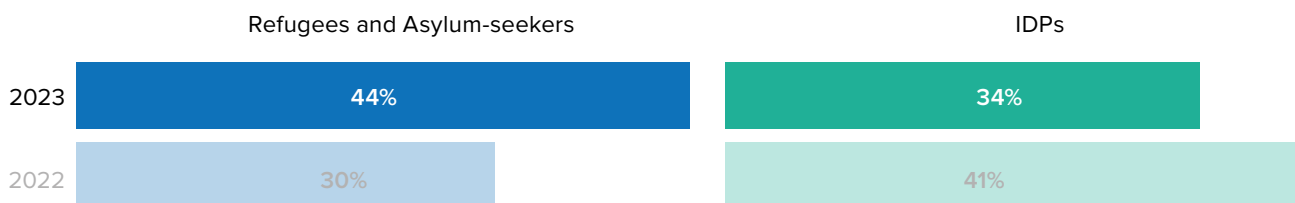
Number of refugees and asylum-seekers benefiting from government social protection programmes | 2020-2023



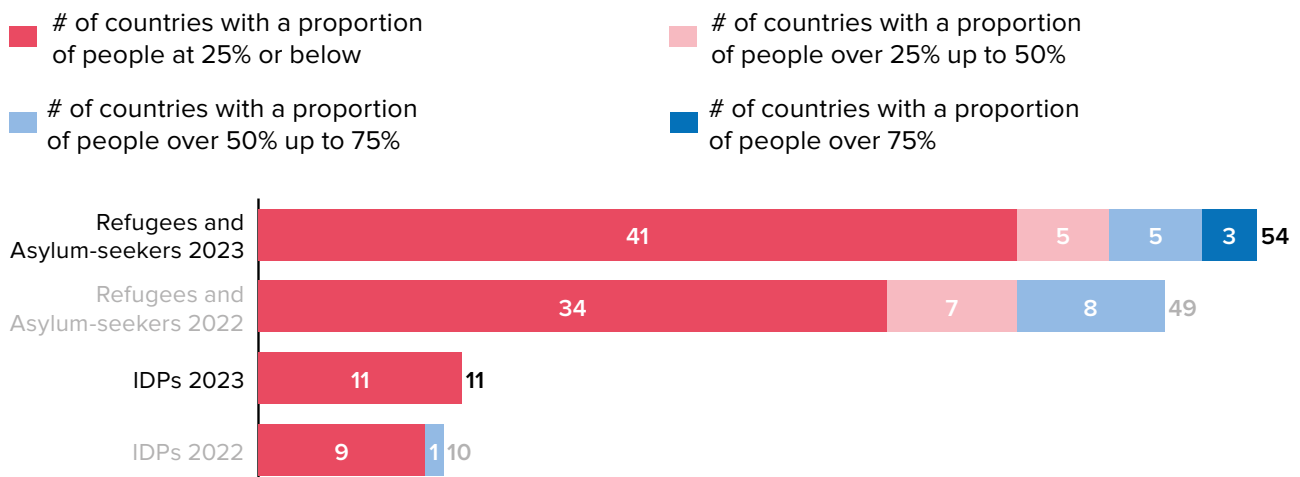
The social protection indicator relies on official national data, which are often unavailable or not disaggregated by legal status. Also, this indicator does not mean full inclusion in the national social protection system, as refugees' access might be restricted to one or more specific programs or subject to a designated period of residence in a particular location. Despite having access to social protection programs, refugees may face additional challenges.

Core indicators

13.1 Proportion of people with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider



13.2 Proportion of people who self-report positive changes in their income compared to the previous year



Financial overview

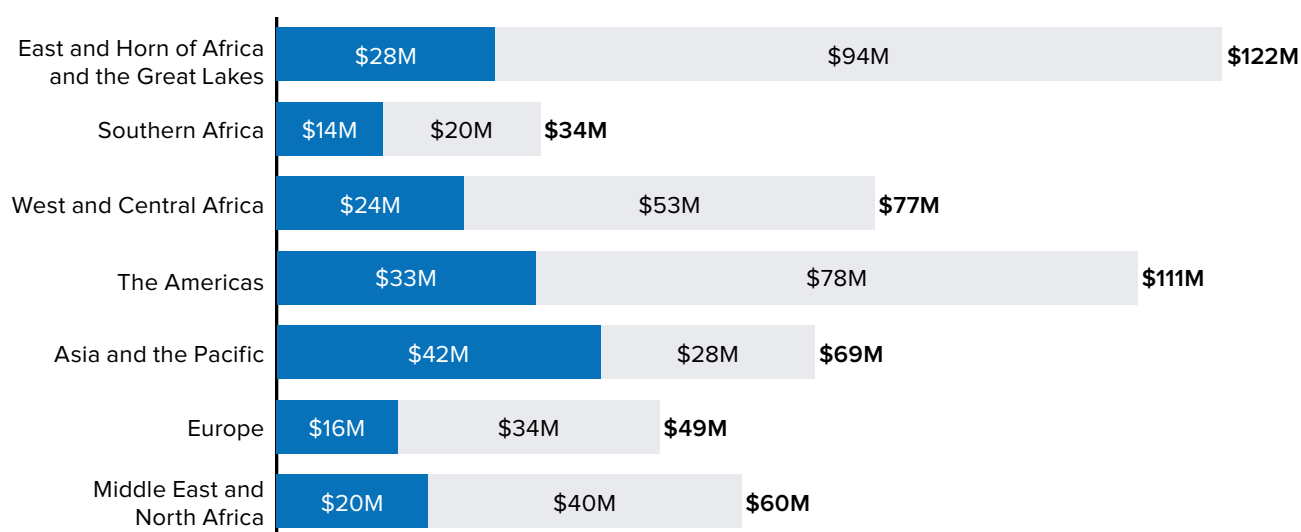
Global expenditure and budget for Self-reliance, economic inclusion and livelihoods

\$178 million spent against a budget of **\$525 million**

\$347 million of unmet needs or **66%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Self-reliance, economic inclusion and livelihoods

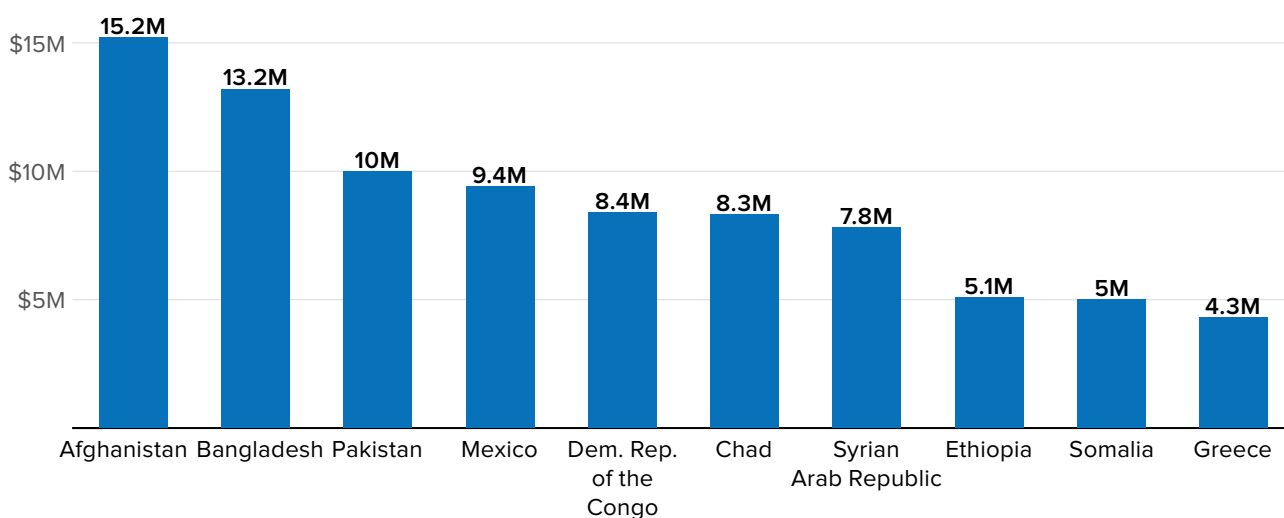
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Self-reliance, economic inclusion and livelihoods: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **49%** of **\$178 million** global expenditure in 2023.





Congolese refugee Francine Mashimango, 49, feeds her chickens with black soldier fly maggots in Tongogara refugee camp in Zimbabwe, part of an insect-breeding project supported by UNHCR, the World Bank and the Chinhoyi University of Technology. "The insect farming project has really helped me," Francine said. "I don't depend on aid." © UNHCR/Hélène Caux



Outcome Area 14

In collaboration with the University of Diffa and the national partner Action Pour le Bien-Être (APBE), UNHCR has established an agricultural center in the Sayam Forage refugee camp, the only refugee camp in Niger. This initiative has trained 125 returning refugees from Nigeria and host families in market gardening and fish farming activities. Additionally, extraction kits have been provided to groups in Sayam Forage to help increase their income. © UNHCR/ Colin Delfosse

Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration

Results in 2023

Recent decades have seen an overall reduction in the number of UNHCR-facilitated refugee returns, chiefly linked to the protracted nature of the conflicts.

Most forcibly displaced and stateless people remain, awaiting a solution, in low and lower-middle-income countries that have fragile economies and weak national services and are reliant on international assistance. The majority of those who decide to return do so in a self-organized manner, and eliciting relatively little or limited support.

In 2023, **1.052 million refugees returned to their country of origin**, compared to 1.356 million who returned in the previous year. (The total number of refugee returnees for 2022 includes 1 million Ukrainian refugees who returned in the calendar year. At the time of writing the [Mid-Year Trends 2023](#), data on returns to Ukraine was just becoming available and it was not possible to distinguish pendular movements from movements made with the intention to stay.)

In **Ukraine**, UNHCR piloted an area-based approach, aiming to support local authorities and communities in achieving durable solutions for war-affected and displaced people. UNHCR targeted 495 local government entities with material and technical support, repairing and rehabilitating infrastructure and public services premises in key areas, such as health, education and energy, as well as community spaces and (re)integration hubs. These interventions followed consultation and coordination with authorities, communities, and other local stakeholders. UNHCR, IOM and UNDP jointly piloted projects aiming at durable solutions and early recovery in two locations, with plans for 12 more locations in 2024.

South Sudanese refugees returned in greatest numbers in 2023. 527,200 returned overall, including 386,800 from Sudan and 111,100 from Ethiopia. UNHCR continues to support the Government of South Sudan to find immediate solutions for those who opted to return.

The violence in **Sudan** also prompted almost 5,600 **Ethiopian refugees** to flee Sudan. However, upon their return to Ethiopia, most of the returnees found their intended destination was inaccessible and they

settled in internal displacement camps in the Tigray region. UNHCR provided cash and in-kind support to address their immediate needs.

Over 26,600 **Burundian** refugees were assisted to return in 2023. The relatively stable political and security situation prompted UNHCR, in discussion with the Governments of Burundi and Tanzania, to transition from facilitating to promoting voluntary repatriation in 2024. The Government of Burundi and UNHCR will continue to mobilize development actors to support the sustainable reintegration of Burundian returnees. Burundian authorities issue all returnees an attestation de reconnaissance. This document grants every returnee access to civil status, national identification documents, and facilitates access to education in areas of return.

In West and Central Africa, UNHCR supported the voluntary repatriation of over 4,000 refugees to the **Central African Republic (CAR)**, mainly from **Cameroon** and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** through its voluntary repatriation programme. It continues to monitor and support an additional 6,000 refugees who returned to CAR independently, without seeking UNHCR support, from Sudan. Additionally, 2,000 Cameroonians voluntarily repatriated from Chad with UNHCR's assistance, alongside refugees who returned independently. UNHCR and its partners facilitated the issue of legally recognized identity documents to returnees which enabled them to enjoy their basic human rights.

The [CAR Solutions Support Platform](#), launched in November 2023, is foreseen to support the creation of an enabling environment for the sustainable return and reintegration of nearly 300,000 refugees who are expected to voluntarily repatriate between 2024 and 2027. In addition, with the support of UNHCR, a [poverty assessment](#), which included internally displaced persons, was carried out in the CAR by the **World Bank**. The data generated will support the national authorities and development actors in designing programmes that foster solutions for IDPs and returnees.

Citing concerns around the cost of living and lack of employment opportunities in host countries, the improved security situation in Afghanistan, and family reunification, over 56,800 **Afghan refugees**

returned to Afghanistan under the UNHCR assisted voluntary repatriation programme. The Government of Pakistan's announcement in October 2023 for undocumented foreigners to leave, which impacted registered refugees and others with valid documents, may have promoted an increasing number of Afghans to seek UNHCR's support for repatriation. Following the announcement, over 500,000 Afghans returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan. Interviews conducted at several crossing points with Afghans indicated that on average, 35% of returnees interviewed upon arrival stated they had a *tazkira*, a national identity card, and 59% of households confirmed having one. *Tazkira* ownership among their spouses and children was 30% and 16% respectively. Together with partners, UNHCR continued efforts to improve conditions for sustainable return through an area-based approach in priority areas of return and reintegration, while providing individual assistance to returnees. To support this, UNHCR and the World Bank established the Strategic Analysis Hub for the Afghanistan situation, launched in late 2022, analysing displacement and return trends as well as challenges and opportunities presented by forced displacement.

12 UNHCR operations collected data on the proportion of returnees with legally recognized identity documents or credentials in 2023, and eight reported that more than 75% of returnees had such documents, suggesting a slight improvement from 2022.

The **2023 Global Refugee Forum** generated a dedicated multi-stakeholder pledge on the Afghanistan situation, drawing nearly \$500 million in commitments. Dubbed "ReSolve", this pledge saw commitments, within the framework of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, that were specific to safe and dignified voluntary returns in priority areas of return and reintegration. There were also pledges geared towards easing pressures on neighbouring countries hosting Afghan refugees.

The Forum also saw the convening of two [multi-stakeholder pledges](#) that sought to build upon promising practices and emerging opportunities for safe and dignified voluntary returns. These pledges on "[Peacebuilding and conflict prevention](#)" and "[Secure housing, land and property rights](#)" yielded a total of 83 commitments.

Challenges to achieving outcomes

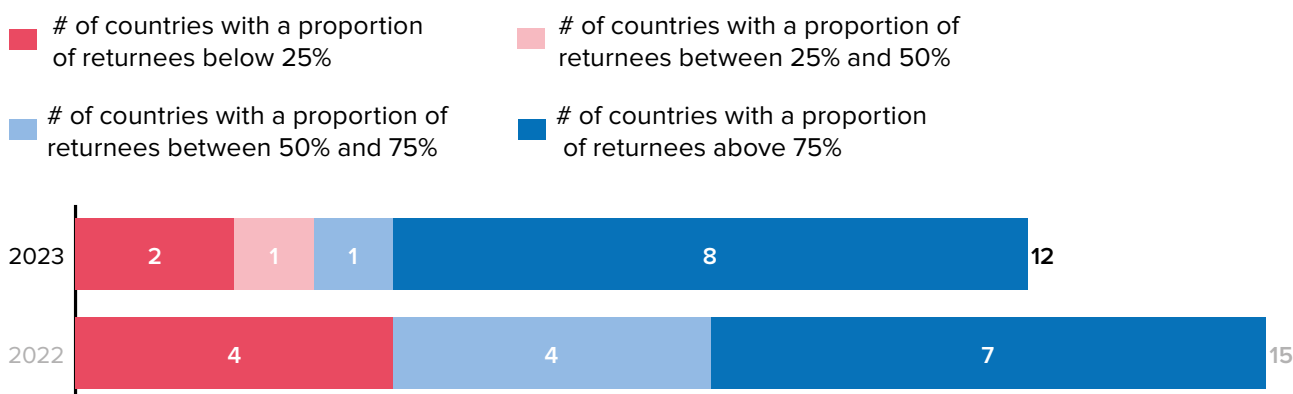
Voluntary repatriation and the sustainability of returns were undermined by fragile or faltering peace processes; continuing insecurity; limited inclusion and participation of refugees in peace processes and repatriation plans; failure to address root causes; destruction or confiscation of housing, land and property; severely overstretched services; and the absence of viable livelihoods.

UNHCR's return package and reintegration support remained **underfunded**. Increased support from development and peace actors was the pivotal factor in governments' inclusion of refugees in development plans in areas of return and in national social protection systems. Underfunding of UNHCR also delayed or limited convoys, prompting some refugees to return in a self-organized manner. It also limited UNHCR's capacity to provide localized and tailored information to forcibly displaced people on conditions in their country of origin.

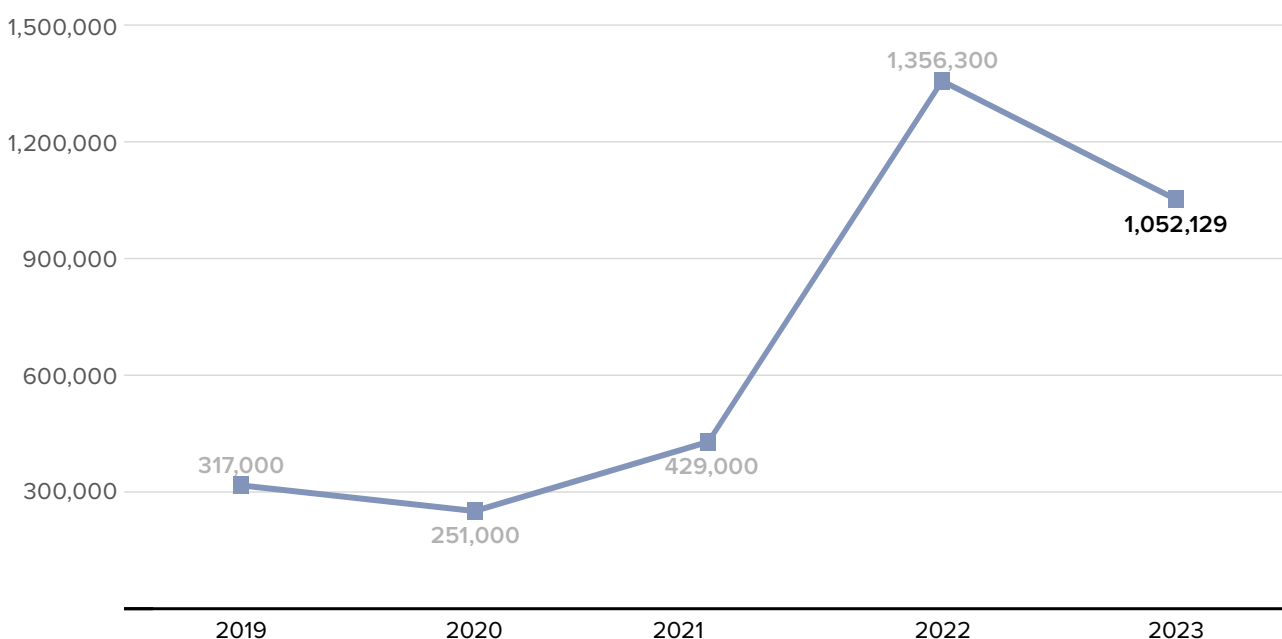
Core indicators



14.1 Proportion of returnees with legally recognized identity documents or credentials



Refugee returns | 2019-2023



Figures for 2022 were revised and updated after the publication of Global Report 2022.

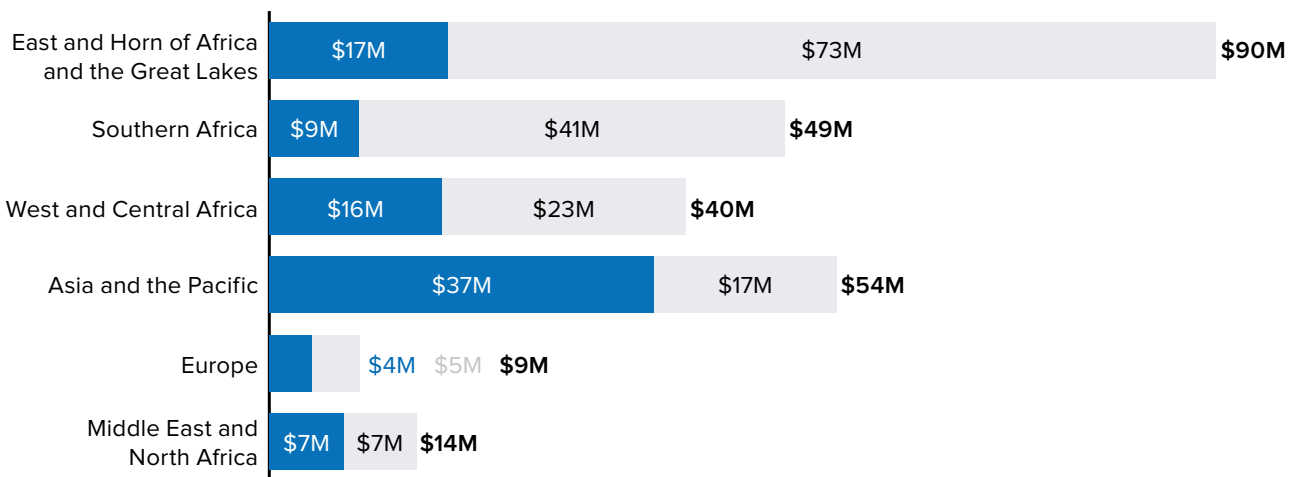
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration

\$91 million spent against a budget of **\$257 million**
\$166 million of unmet needs or **65%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration

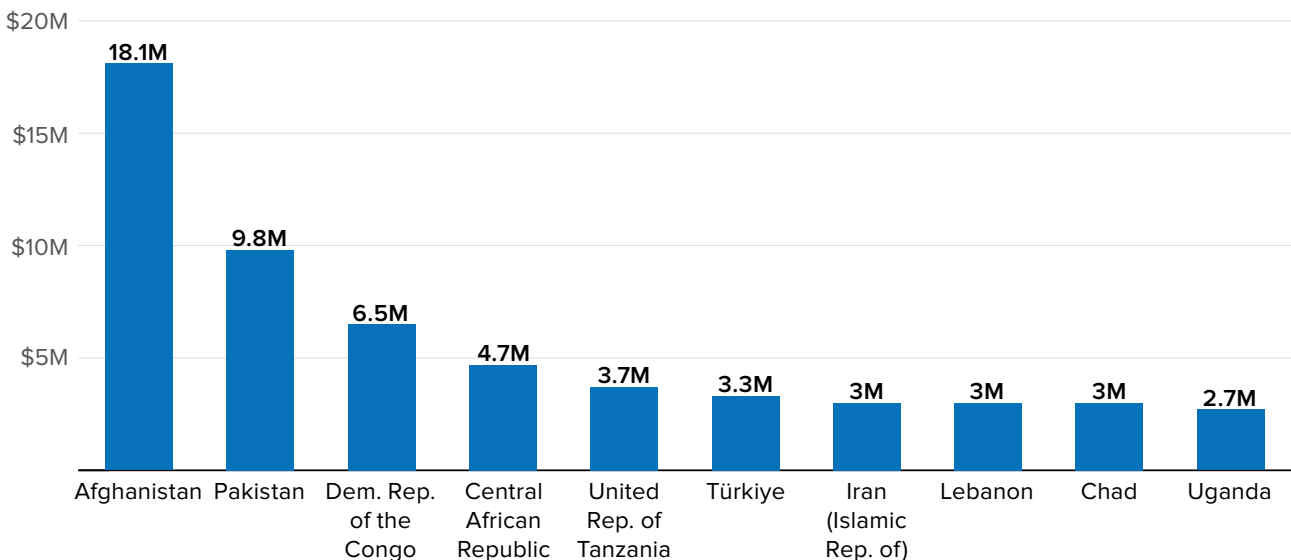
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **64%** of **\$91 million** global expenditure in 2023.





Outcome Area 15

Ziad has struggled to put his carpentry skills to use since being forced to flee the Syrian Arab Republic 12 years ago. With the support of UNHCR and its partner Talent Beyond Boundaries, he signed a contract to work with a construction company in Canada. © UNHCR/Nisrine Benyahia

Resettlement, complementary pathways and family reunification

Results in 2023

Refugee resettlement saw a major upturn in 2023, although the need for resettlement places continued to rise, as more people became refugees, the number of emergencies grew, and more people were stuck in protracted refugee situations. UNHCR's estimate that **2 million refugees** would need resettlement in 2023 was one third more than its estimate for **2022**.

UNHCR submitted 155,486 refugees for resettlement in 2023, an increase of one third since 2022. **96,311 refugees departed**, two thirds more than in 2022, and the second highest annual number in decades. The **United States** and **Canada** were the top destination countries, while **Afghan, Syrian, Congolese, Eritrean, Myanmar and Somali refugees** were resettled in greatest numbers.

In all, 96 UNHCR operations submitted resettlement cases to 24 countries offering resettlement places, and 18% of submissions were made to respond to the **urgent or emergency needs of refugees**, underscoring resettlement's function in protection and in responsibility- and burden-sharing between States. Many of those resettled in 2023 came from countries of asylum such as **Türkiye, Bangladesh, Malaysia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Lebanon, Jordan, Colombia, Rwanda or Burundi**. However, most resettlements came after more than two years of waiting: the **average processing time** from submission to departure was 783 days in 2023, up from 751 days in 2022.

The **identification of refugees in need of resettlement** is part of UNHCR's ongoing protection and assistance activities. A consistent application of the different **submission categories** – including “women and girls at risk” and “survivors of

violence and/or torture” – is part of UNHCR’s accountability to affected people. UNHCR also employed an increasingly strategic and data-driven approach to resettlement, in order to allow for the identification of larger numbers or groups of refugees in protracted situations, such as in **Uganda**, where UNHCR adopted a tool called Humanitarian Response Identification, based on an algorithm of relevant protection, socio-demographic and vulnerability indicators to identify refugees for resettlement.

UNHCR released a new “[Resettlement handbook](#)” in May 2023, replacing the 2011 version and offering comprehensive operational guidance on processing resettlement cases. It incorporates best practices from different countries to improve processing efficiency while maintaining and strengthening protection and integrity measures.

Despite the increase in resettlement quotas generously provided by States for 2023, the available places remained far below the needs. The number of refugee resettlement departures facilitated by UNHCR was less than 5% of the estimated 2 million needed in 2023. UNHCR projected a further 20% rise in [resettlement needs in 2024](#). In addition to resettlement facilitated by UNHCR, there were almost 58,000 other resettlement departures in 2023.

Backers of a [multi-stakeholder pledge on resettlement](#) at the Global Refugee Forum renewed commitment to increase resettlement quota, advocate to grow resettlement, ensure access to resettlement for at-risk populations, including LGBTIQ+ refugees; multi-year planning, and meaningful refugee engagement.

Complementary pathways

Alongside resettlement, UNHCR continued to work with a myriad of various partners to ensure refugees unhindered access to **legal migration pathways**, including for family reunification or to [work](#) or [study](#). The Global Refugee Forum galvanized commitment for complementary pathways and family reunification, with nearly 100 actors, including States, private sector and civil society, supporting four multi-stakeholder pledges on [skills-based pathways](#), [family reunification](#), [community sponsorship](#) and [refugee travel documents](#).

The expansion of complementary pathways has taken time as the legal frameworks are not entirely inclusive of refugee mobility and necessary resources to start programming in this area have not yet been fully committed. But the Forum marked an important moment of moving from pilots to larger scale projects, particularly with the launch of the **Italian labour mobility programme for migration**, which includes refugees, and commitments from other countries to consider or expand their migration frameworks to ensure refugee inclusion—as in Australia and Germany—while ensuring that their international protection needs are met. Together with other actors, UNHCR continued to build the infrastructure to support the scaling up of complementary pathways and refugees access to such opportunities including through train-to-hire models and linked labour needs with academic opportunities.

UNHCR developed its first guidance on complementary pathways, coupled with a learning course and websites. Together with [International Institute of Humanitarian Law](#) at Sanremo, it trained UNHCR staff and supported the holding of the [2nd International Forum on Complementary Pathways](#). UNHCR also developed its first Operational Guidelines on Family Reunification and worked closely with a number of partners to develop a comprehensive support framework for their implementation through partnership within the family reunification pledge. UNHCR, as part of the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative, supported the launch of the Global Sponsorship Fund and **Brazil’s** commitment to pilot a new sponsorship programme through multi-stakeholder coordination.

UNHCR’s advocacy led to a number of key countries joining the [machine-readable refugee travel documents](#) pledge, whereby some of the biggest refugee-hosting States, such as **Ethiopia** and **Chad**, committed to issue travel documents that protect refugees from refoulement and facilitate their cross-border travel for complementary pathways opportunities in work or study. UNHCR also enhanced its collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to streamline the advocacy towards wider issuance and acceptance of machine-readable refugee travel documents, including but not limited to Convention Travel Documents. Expansion of access to such documents

requires technical and funding support, but their acceptance would increase the accessibility of skills-based opportunities for refugees.

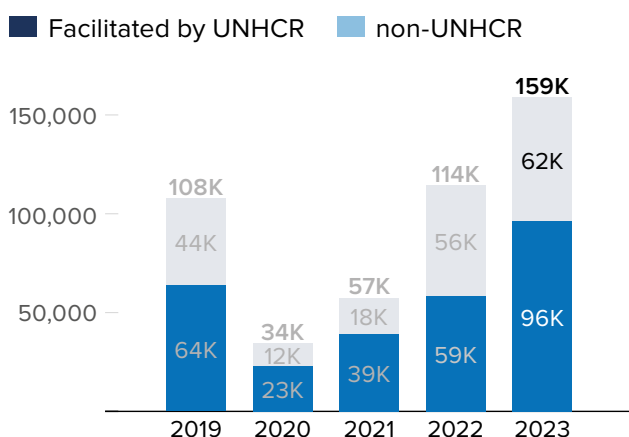
Given that complementary pathways essentially envision refugee inclusion in legal migration, it is challenging to capture refugee-specific arrival data, as they are typically folded into the general legal migration statistics maintained by States. Additionally, pathways should normally allow refugees autonomy in access without UNHCR direct case support or engagement, making UNHCR-owned data on the topic rather limited as well.

UNHCR continued its collaboration with the OECD to gather, analyse and publish indicative data on complementary pathways. The “[Safe pathways for refugees IV](#)” report indicates that OECD countries and Brazil issued approximately 215,000 **residence**

permits to Afghan, Eritrean, Iranian, Iraqi, Somali, Syrian and Venezuelan refugees for the purposes of family reunification, education or employment opportunities in 2022. Family permits were the most issued (57% of all permits), making family reunification the most important legal pathway for refugees.

In 2023, UNHCR operations invested in helping individuals to learn about and access family reunification and complementary pathways. In **Ethiopia**, UNHCR and partners facilitated complementary pathways for 3,257 refugees, more than 96% of whom were admitted through private sponsorship pathways. UNHCR has invested heavily in supporting refugees’ departures for sponsorship pathways for **Canada**, in particular.

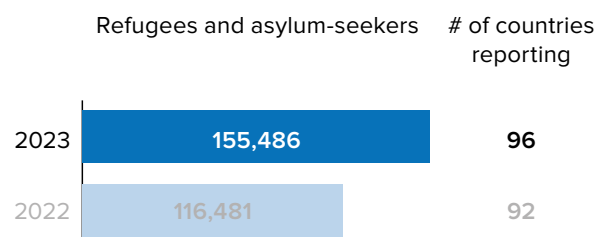
Resettlement departures | 2019-2023



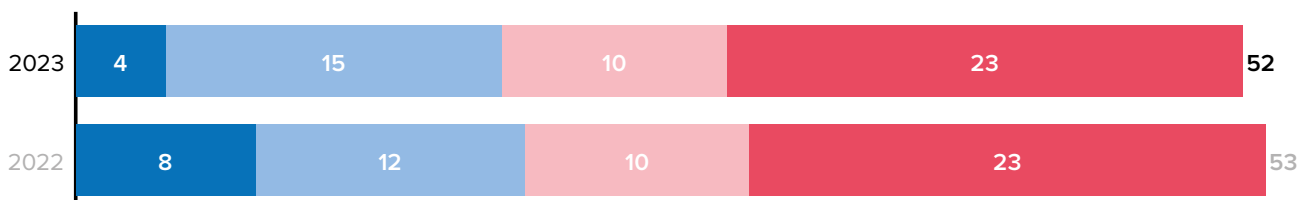
Core indicators



15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement



15.2 Average processing time from resettlement submission to departure under normal priority



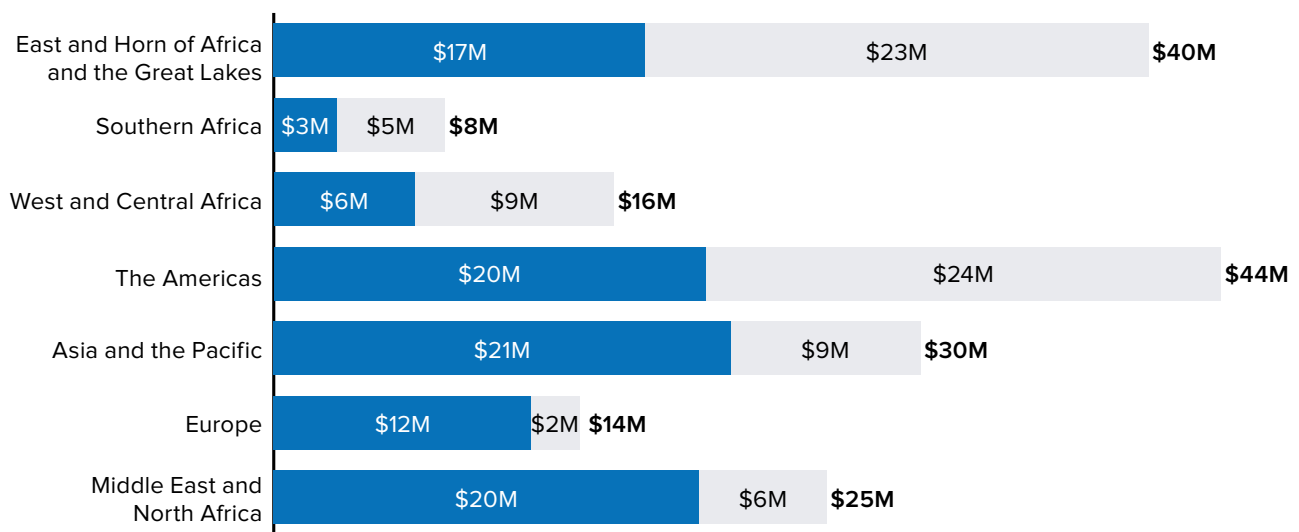
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Resettlement and complementary pathways

\$119 million spent against a budget of **\$199 million**
\$80 million of unmet needs or **40%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Resettlement and complementary pathways

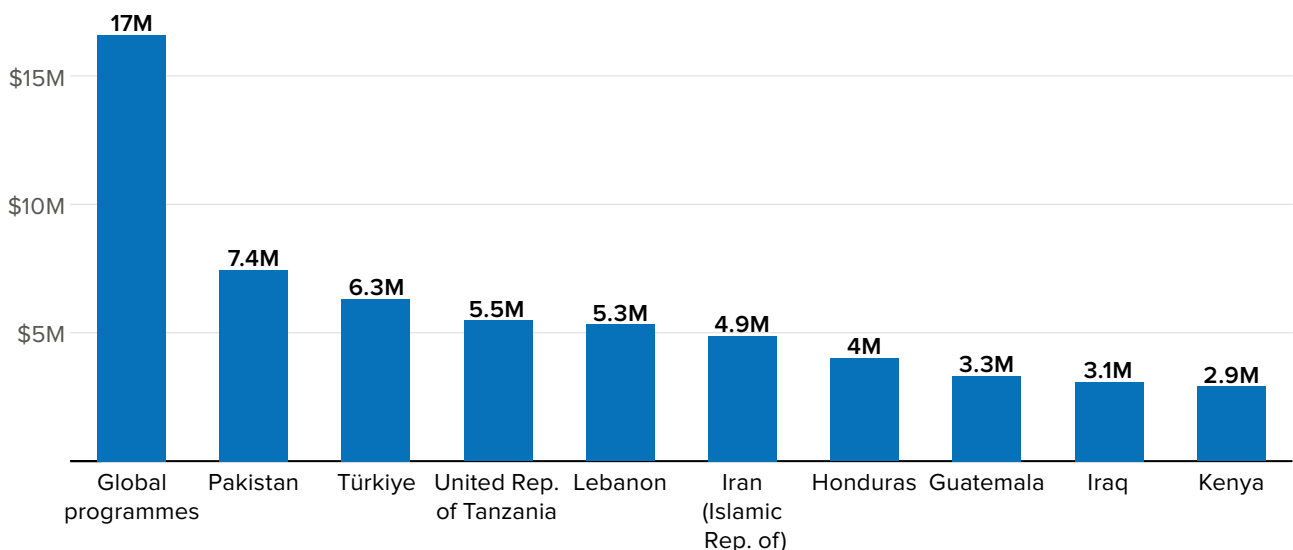
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Resettlement and complementary pathways: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **50%** of **\$119 million** global expenditure in 2023.





Outcome Area 16

Lete Isayas, a refugee from Eritrea, sifts cereals outside her shelter in Alemwach refugee site in Ethiopia. UNHCR, its partners and the Federal Government of Ethiopia built the site to house thousands of Eritrean refugees who were displaced when conflict erupted in Tigray region in northern Ethiopia. The site provides an integrated approach in which refugees and the host community share services such as education, health, and access to safe drinking water. Currently, over 20,000 refugees are accommodated at the refugee site. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

Local integration and other local solutions

Results in 2023



Although most people who have been forced to flee from their homes want to return one day, the reality is that very few are able to do so, and more and more find themselves in situations of protracted displacement. There were **59 protracted refugee situations in 37 countries** in 2023, a slight increase as Congolese refugees in Kenya and Somali refugees in Uganda were classified as protracted.

Two important gauges of local integration are refugees' **land and housing rights** in the country that hosts them and their **coverage by national social protection systems**. Both showed little sign of overall positive momentum in 2023. 41 UNHCR country operations collected data on the right to housing and/or land tenure, and 26 reported that less than 25% of refugees and asylum-seekers had secure tenure rights. In most of the 49 countries reporting data on national social protection systems, the majority of refugees and asylum-seekers were not covered by those systems.

However, there were **improvements** in **access to land for agriculture**, with 54% of refugees residing in countries with unrestricted legal rights to use land for agriculture, up from 40% in 2021, and improvements in **property rights**, with 63% of refugees residing in countries where they had unrestricted legal rights to own or lease property for business purposes, up from 46% in 2021. 2023 also saw an overall positive trend in refugees' access to opportunities for self-reliance, thereby creating notable pathways to local integration.

UNHCR's largest investment in local integration in 2023 was in **Iraq**, where the agency's **Area Based Programming for Protection and Solutions (A2PS)** initiative promoted the integration and reintegration of persons forced to flee, including Syrians and internally displaced Iraqis. The programme entails the identification of locations where these groups live side-by-side with vulnerable host communities, and the development of projects that support the provision of quality public services through relevant government bodies, in partnership with development actors.

12 A2PS projects were completed throughout 2023, including the rehabilitation of water treatment plants and irrigation canals, the solarization of street lighting, the construction of hydroponics greenhouses, and enhancements to public parks and markets. In 2023, 173,540 refugees, IDPs, and locals benefited from these interventions.

UNHCR's second-largest integration operation was **Uganda**, the third largest refugee-hosting country worldwide, where the Government has provided refugees living in settlements with plots of land for agricultural use. Refugees in Uganda continue to enjoy many of the same rights as locals. While Ugandan law also allows refugees who have been in the country for 20 years to be naturalized, many refugees face difficulties providing documentary evidence to qualify. There is furthermore limited awareness among refugees of these provisions and limited data on naturalization. UNHCR – in an effort to overcome these barriers – continued its work with legal partners throughout 2023.

UNHCR continued its advocacy for secure housing, land and property rights in **South Sudan** through the provision of legal counselling, strengthening dispute resolution mechanisms, facilitating the issuance of tenure documents, and the construction of housing for persons with special needs. With social protection systems almost non-existent, UNHCR also supported the World Bank with the launch of its “[South Sudan productive safety net for socioeconomic opportunities project](#).”

UNHCR supported the Government of **Zambia** in the formulation of its [National Refugee Policy and Implementation Plan](#), which aims to remove barriers to self-reliance, promote refugee inclusion in national systems, and enable refugees to contribute to the local economy. The agency also continued its advocacy and capacity-building work in **Angola**, where the Government resumed refugee registration after an eight-year suspension and recognized refugee status for all asylum-seekers who had processes pending prior to 2015. UNHCR supported the Government with preparations to issue essential documentation to around 28,300 asylum-seekers.

The Government also decided to issue residence permits to all registered refugees and asylum-seekers from Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda who opted for local integration during a screening in 2021.

With a vision of transforming **Kenya's** decades-old refugee camps into integrated settlements, in June 2023, the Government of Kenya in collaboration with UNHCR and other partners officially announced its intention of re-aligning the country's approach to refugee management with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees, via the multi-year, multi-partner, “[Shirika Plan](#)”, an important shift towards greater inclusion of refugees and improved socioeconomic prospects for host communities and the wider Kenyan society.

Convened jointly by UN-Habitat and the Government of Ethiopia, the 2023 **Global Refugee Forum multi-stakeholder pledge** on “[Climate resilient sustainable human settlements for refugees and their hosting communities](#)” brought into focus the need for sustainable and integrated approaches to environmental and climate action, shelter and housing, access to basic services and improved urban planning and management in refugee-hosting countries. The pledge drew a total of 43 commitments, including notable pledges from the Government of **Kenya** – towards the roll-out the Shirika Plan; the Government of **Switzerland** – supporting planning for sustainable settlements via the [Geneva Technical Hub](#); and the Government of **Germany** – through scaled-up commitments on water and energy infrastructure, and employability and entrepreneurship in the context of the Shirika Plan.

Further to this, the Government of the **United States of America** (in its capacity as 2022-2023 Chair of the [MIRPS Support Platform](#)) pledged in support of the [MIRPS joint pledge on integration of displaced persons](#), in alignment with the MIRPS member States' efforts to advance the self-reliance of forcibly displaced populations across Central America and Mexico. The US Government also committed to supporting – through UNHCR – targeted projects with each MIRPS State to implement good practices that foster local integration for refugees and other displaced persons in the region.

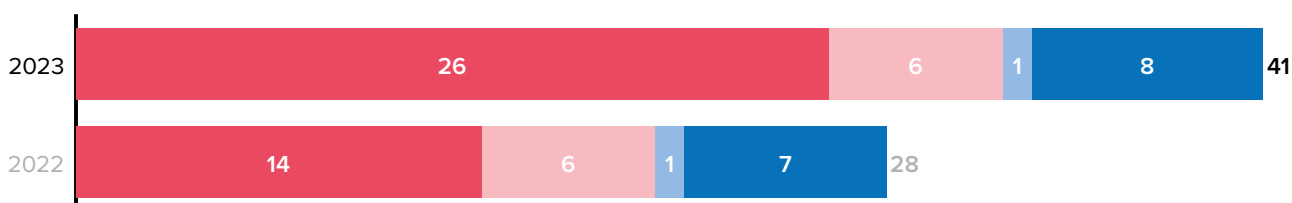
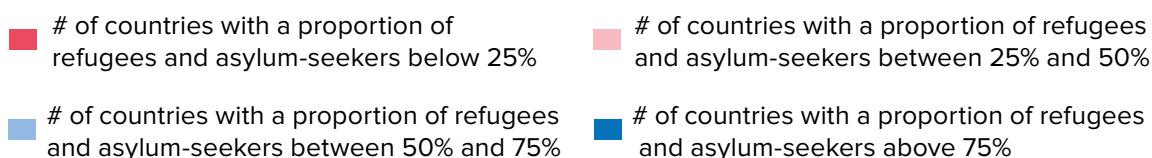
Challenges to achieving outcomes

Amidst persistent policy and administrative barriers across many operations, local integration and inclusion remain elusive for a significant proportion of refugees worldwide. With restrictive policies and procedures inhibiting the timely processing of applications for naturalization – where the legal provisions permit – refugees largely remain in limbo, with limited access to opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, financial and social protection services.

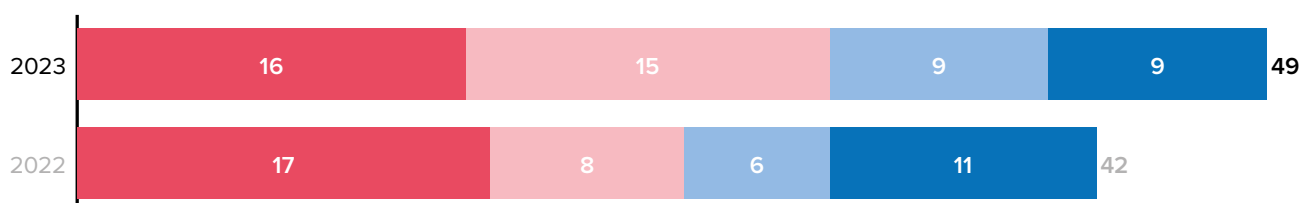
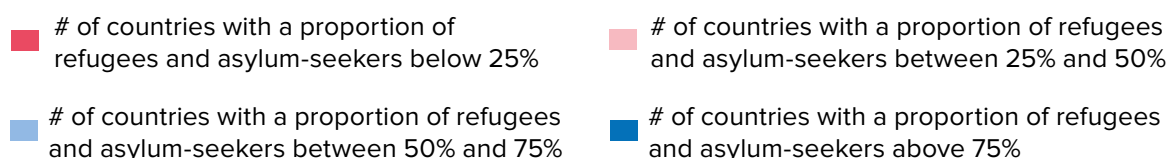
Access to secure housing, land and property rights also persists in many refugee-hosting situations. While UNHCR continued its advocacy for secure housing, land and property arrangements in host countries – for residential, subsistence and entrepreneurial purposes – there was a need for greater engagement of development actors and more transparent processes that enable refugees to participate in decision-making on how land is used, managed, and developed.

Core indicators

16.1 Proportion of refugees and asylum-seekers with secure tenure rights to housing and/or land



16.2 Proportion of refugees and asylum-seekers covered by national social protection systems



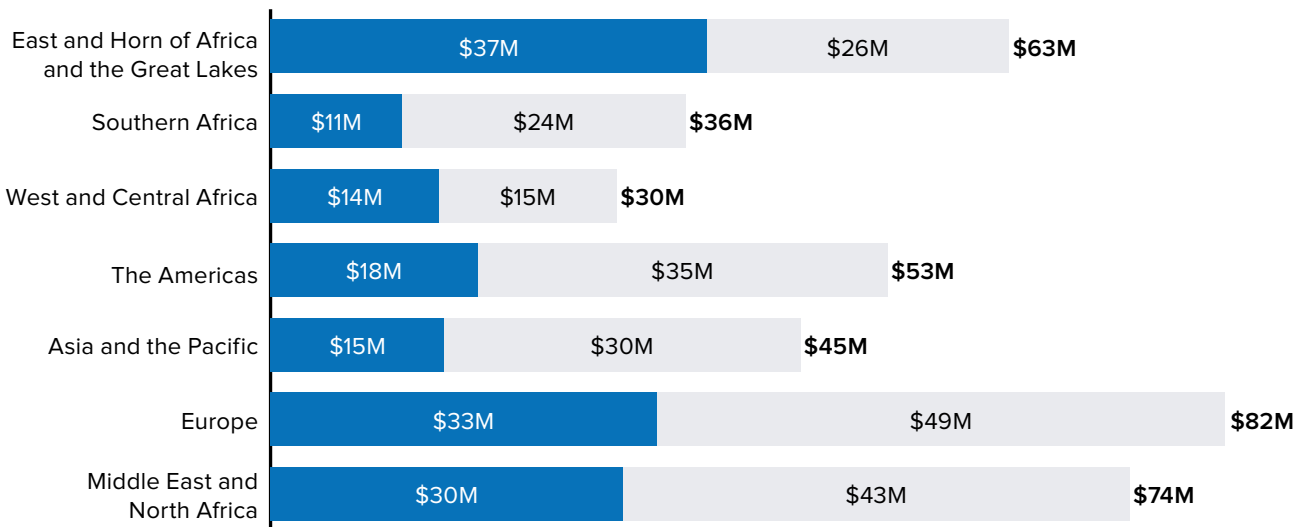
Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Local integration and other local solutions

\$159 million spent against a budget of **\$382 million**
\$223 million of unmet needs or **58%** of the budget

Regional expenditure and unmet needs for Local integration and other local solutions

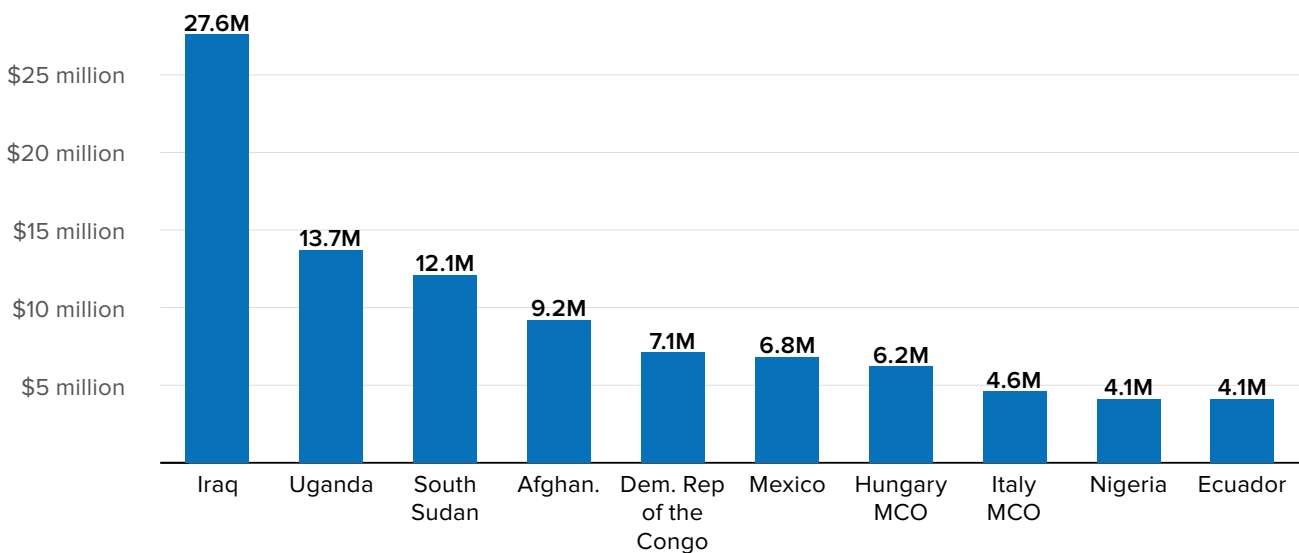
■ Expenditure ■ Unmet needs



The total appearing at the end of each bar represents the budget amount.

Local integration and other local solutions: top ten operations by expenditure

These ten operations accounted for **60%** of **\$159 million** global expenditure in 2023.



MCO = Multi-country office



UNHCR staff take receipt of 53 tons of emergency supplies airlifted to Benghazi, Libya, to support thousands of people displaced by Storm Daniel in September 2023. © UNHCR/Ziyad Alhamadi

Enabling Areas

The five Enabling Areas cover support and management functions needed to run UNHCR's programmes and help the organization work more efficiently and effectively.

They include resource mobilization, supply, oversight, human resources management, policy management, support to governing bodies, information technology, operational support, learning and financial management.

Efficient, modern, and streamlined systems and processes

UNHCR successfully implemented a series of initiatives under its Business Transformation Programme (BTP). Central to this was the successful launch of Cloud ERP in 2023, a cloud-based enterprise resource planning solution, which integrated various functions such as financial management, contributions management, supply chain management, budget monitoring and reporting, and travel management. The introduction of Cloud ERP streamlined processes, eliminated redundancies, and digitized travel management, resulting in faster and more efficient execution.

In collaboration with partners like the UNDP and the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC), UNHCR introduced a Global Payment Gateway, integrated with Cloud ERP, enhancing global cash forecasting, liquidity visibility, and automation capabilities. Another noteworthy achievement was the launch of UNIFIER, a global facilities database consolidating comprehensive information on over 550 UNHCR offices worldwide. This database, which includes details such as rent costs, space, waste production, water and energy consumption, and physical accessibility, supports day-to-day operations and decision-making. Moreover, the roll-out of the Project Reporting, Oversight, and Monitoring Solution (PROMS) digitized the management of over 1,800 funded partnership agreements, enabling better visibility, oversight, and result attribution. PROMS is expected to enable significant future time efficiencies in partnership management, including for partners, who can directly access the platform. Over 3,000 UNHCR and partner staff globally were trained on PROMS. Furthermore, UNHCR realigned its existing budgeting and planning tool, COMPASS, to work with the new systems introduced under the BTP. Project Link was integrated with different systems and tools, completing 101 data integrations, streamlining business processes, and reducing manual work.

The Digital Gateway Project, an important component of UNHCR's registration efforts, marked a significant milestone in its first year. It provided self-service to 113,000 people, exceeding its initial goal of 75,000. In Egypt, the project introduced self-onboarding and appointment scheduling to expedite the emergency registration of refugees from Sudan.

Furthermore, a collaboration between UNHCR, IOM and the United States led to the creation of the Safe Mobility Initiative. This self-onboarding portal provides refugees and migrants with safer and legal migration routes to the USA. The initiative, which has been implemented in Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Ecuador, enables users to pre-register and complete a questionnaire that guides them to the appropriate support from either UNHCR or IOM.

UNHCR's "Population Registration and Identity Management EcoSystem" (PRIMES) saw a surge in registrations, with an additional 2.55 million people, bringing the total active registered population to over 17.1 million. Furthermore, Chad and Egypt received extra support for their emergency response to the situation in Sudan. In Ukraine, efforts were made to register internally displaced persons (IDPs) to ensure their protection and the delivery of assistance. The registration system underwent a major technological revamp with the migration of proGres (Profile Global Registration System) to the cloud. This transition resulted in immediate enhancements in terms of performance, stability, and security.

UNHCR made significant strides in expanding the reach of the Refugee Data Finder, which has now garnered 700,000 page views and has been utilized by nearly 100,000 users via the mobile app. In addition, UNHCR has enriched the Microdata Library by offering 170 new datasets. In a collaborative effort with the OECD, UNHCR enhanced the reporting of financial data in the Global Compact Indicator Report. This collaboration resulted in a twofold increase in the number of data records for the GCR Indicator Report, rising from 408 in 2021 to 816 in 2023.

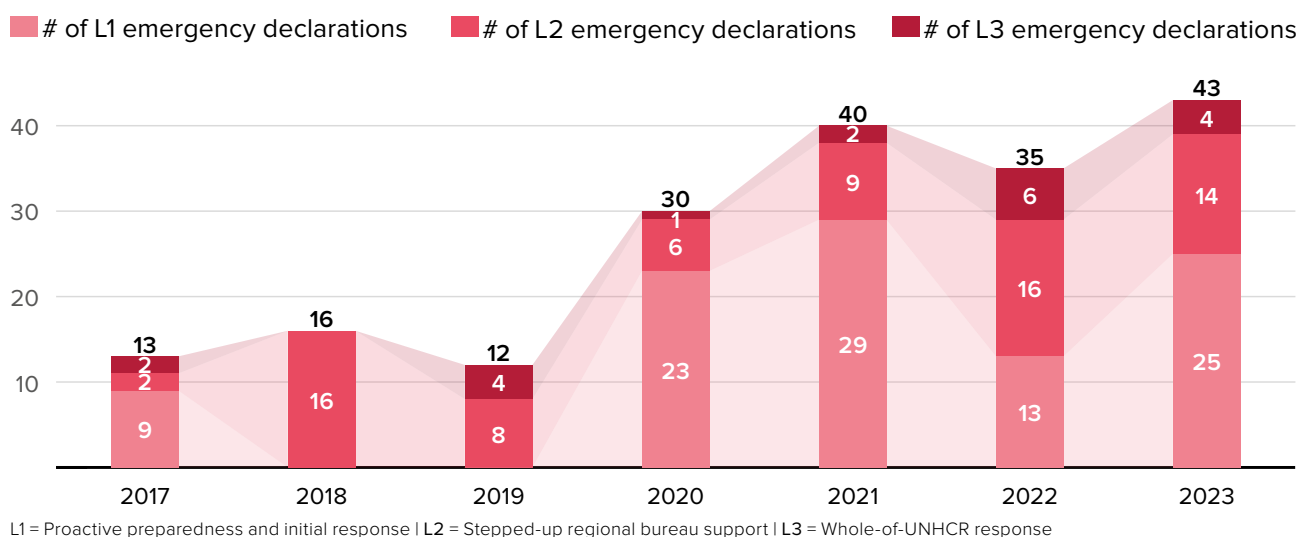
Through collaboration with partners and the adoption of innovative solutions, UNHCR aims to better fulfil its mission of providing support and protection to refugees and displaced persons worldwide.

Enhanced operational support, supply chain and technology

In a year fraught with escalating crises, UNHCR found itself grappling with 43 emergencies across 29 countries, including Level 3 emergencies in Egypt, Chad, Sudan, and South Sudan. This surge in emergencies, up from 35 the previous year, prompted a robust response.

In response to these crises, UNHCR deployed approximately 470 colleagues, including over 200 experts from standby partners. During the year, UNHCR transported life-saving items worth \$47.5 million from its global stockpiles.

New emergency declarations in 2023



UNHCR rolled out a new Policy on emergency preparedness and response, bolstered by extensive training that reached over 1,000 colleagues. Efforts to promote proactive emergency preparedness included expanding emergency partnerships, revamping the Emergency Preparedness and Response Portal and launching the new Guidance on Emergency Preparedness translated into multiple languages. To cater to the increasing deployment needs in francophone countries, UNHCR developed a specific French-speaking emergency roster.

UNHCR ramped up its emergency response mechanisms, doubling the number of emergency training sessions attended by over 380 colleagues and introducing an updated Emergency Handbook which is also open to partners. The organization's robust emergency response mechanism, lauded in the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) report, facilitated rapid surge and timely scale-up in crisis response.

Lessons gleaned from previous responses and evaluations, including in Ukraine and through the Sudan situation real-time review, informed UNHCR's strategic planning and the development of simplified procedures across operational areas. UNHCR is actively engaged in discussions on encouraging engagement of the local actors in an emergency response.

In supply management, the report on Improving the sustainability of UNHCR core relief items explored the sustainable alternatives to the use of virgin plastics for UNHCR's core relief items. UNHCR procured 190,000 blankets made of 100% recycled PET for its response in Ukraine.

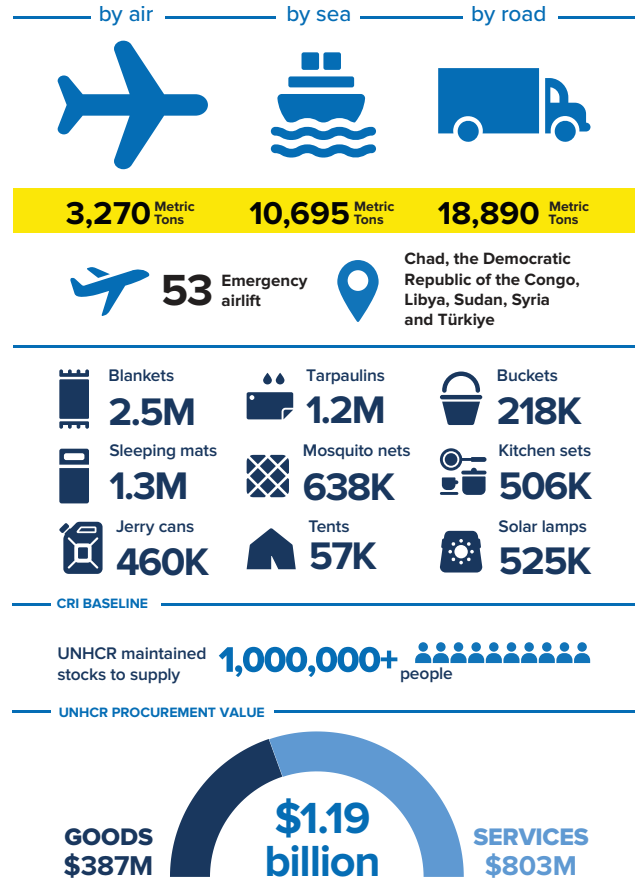
Efforts to reduce carbon emissions included developing environmentally friendly product specifications for six core relief items and working on four more items.

Promoting a culture of security has remained a priority for UNHCR, critical to facilitating the delivery of services in challenging and complex security environments. The organization provided support in the management of security risk, during multiple crises throughout 2023 through guidance to managers and support to victims impacted by 466 security incidents over the past year. UNHCR actively contributed to the UN Security Management System through coordination, development and implementation of policies and processes.

The organization continues to invest and deliver extensive security training for UNHCR workforce, managers and partners. 845 female colleagues participated in the Women's Security Awareness Training.

UNHCR continued sharing good practices and lessons learned through the Standby Partnership Network and participating in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Emergency Directors Group, including through joint senior-level visits.

To streamline travel management, a global framework agreement was established at Headquarters, and gradually rolled out to about 40 operations using travel services provided by three booking centres located in Italy, Kenya, and Thailand. In parallel, UNHCR continued consolidating



air travel data with several UN agencies into a unified database called the Travel Data Cube. This consolidation enabled the establishment of global agreements with airlines, leading to enhanced pricing and greater flexibility.

© UNHCR



MSC Foundation's in-kind support for Türkiye and Syria: Amplifying UNHCR's emergency relief and distribution capacity

Following the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria in 2023, the MSC Foundation played a crucial role in facilitating the transportation of almost 440,000 essential relief items in 101 shipping containers containing essential relief items. This

enabled UNHCR to swiftly reach almost 270,000 displaced individuals with vital emergency aid.

This prompt and efficient logistical support ensured that critical relief items reached those in need without delay, even in the most challenging circumstances.

Strengthened human resources and improved organizational culture

UNHCR has consistently demonstrated its commitment to its workforce through its people-centric approach, strategic partnerships, and innovative technology. This commitment is further reflected in the organization's efforts to cultivate a diverse and empowering culture that mirrors the communities we serve. Significant progress has been made in integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into UNHCR operations, with a particular emphasis on achieving gender parity at all levels. To further support employees, UNHCR introduced a new parental leave policy with inclusive definitions of parenthood and expanded leave entitlements.

UNHCR has launched an updated Strategy and Action Plan on Tackling Sexual Misconduct 2023-25, building on the work accomplished through the previous three-year strategy and responding to the organization's current operational needs. The Office of the Principal Advisor on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) provided support and guidance, engaging with a network of over 400 country-based PSEA focal points to integrate protection from sexual misconduct, particularly in emergency contexts.

UNHCR also continued to refine its HR Digital Solution, Workday, which streamlines HR processes and modernizes the employee digital HR experience. Collaboration with regional HR teams was strengthened, supported by initiatives such as the Workforce Planning Handbook. [Occupational health and safety](#) remain a cornerstone of UNHCR's employee experience strategy. The launch of the UNHCR Strategy on Workplace Mental Health and Psychosocial Well-being and the UNHCR Mental Health Forum bolster mental health awareness and support. Relatedly, good people management remains a priority, evidenced by the introduction of the new Evolve performance management

model and the pilot of Regional Talent Advisors to enhance talent management efforts. Partnerships with renowned institutions further bolster UNHCR's efforts in promoting good people management and workforce engagement. In 2023, UNHCR enhanced its efforts in professional development and overall well-being of UNHCR staff through programmes such as the Connected Leadership Academy, the Women in Management Programme, UN Foundation for Peace on Purpose Workshops, and Wellbeing@UNHCR.

UNHCR continued to cultivate a robust risk management culture across all operational and management areas, striving to achieve an advanced level of risk maturity. The Risk Management Strategy was operationalized through four interconnected plans focusing on data, learning, communications, and human resources. Initiatives included enhancing learning opportunities, launching multilingual e-courses, and integrating risk management responsibilities into job descriptions. The Risk Network's outreach engaged over 8,600 participants through training sessions and speaking events. The strategy also emphasized strengthening risk culture through communication channels such as newsletters, podcasts, and video series. Oversight bodies have positively recognized UNHCR's efforts to strengthen its risk management culture and acknowledged the solid progress made. In fact, the Board of Auditors observed that UNHCR has achieved a high level of risk maturity and is one of the leading organizations in the UN system in this area. [MOPAN's Assessment Report](#) of UNHCR's performance also identified risk management as an area of strength for UNHCR.

Furthermore, UNHCR continued to prioritize supporting its workforce through various initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive organizational culture, addressing sexual misconduct, modernizing HR processes, enhancing mental health support, and promoting good risk management practices.

STAFF MEMBERS

15,490

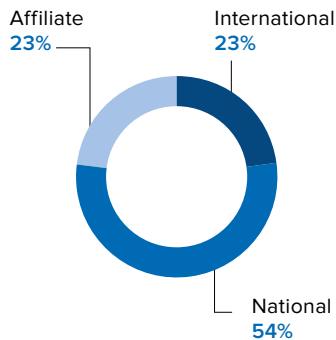
AFFILIATE WORKFORCE*

4,815

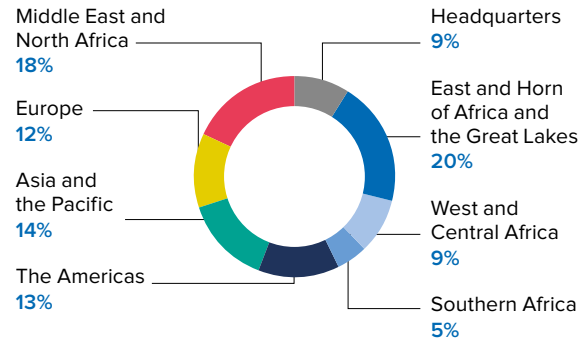
GLOBAL WORKFORCE

20,305

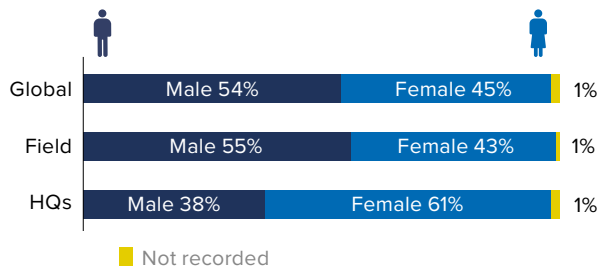
Global workforce by category



Global workforce by region



Global workforce by gender



Global workforce by location



* Includes UNVs, individual contractors and consultants hired through UNOPS or directly, deployees, secondees and interns.

Enhanced partnerships, coordination, public outreach and resource mobilization

UNHCR demonstrated a robust commitment to impactful communications, news, and storytelling. This was particularly evident in various initiatives such as the Global Refugee Forum, the Global Compact on Refugees, climate action, and efforts to build solidarity for displaced and stateless people. Despite facing challenges such as reduced global interest in displacement issues, UNHCR maintained its position as a leading humanitarian voice, securing mentions in over 404,000 media pieces and 4.8 million public social posts. Key milestones, including World Refugee Day and the Global Trends Report, generated significant coverage. This demonstrated UNHCR's ability to drive the narrative on global forced displacement and centre refugee voices.

The organization emphasized ethical and dignified communications, rolling out its first-ever Ethical Communications Guidelines. This ensured integrity and dignity in communication with, for, and about displaced and stateless people.

In 2023, UNHCR bolstered participation and co-creation with displaced and stateless people, with approximately 80% of all global communications products being people-centred. Noteworthy initiatives included partnerships with platforms like YouTube. Refugee women led on UNHCR's social media accounts during International Women's Day, and refugee voices were featured in various communications efforts.

Partnerships with Goodwill Ambassadors and high-profile individuals significantly contributed to UNHCR's communication efforts. It is worth noting that 50% of UNHCR's global Goodwill Ambassadors are refugees or former refugees. Collaborations with entities like Al Jazeera, Reuters Connect, YouTube, Google, FC Barcelona, FIFA, and the Academy Awards helped reach new audiences and mobilize support.

UNHCR also focused on integrity and oversight in partnership reform efforts, actively engaging in inter-agency efforts to improve collaboration through tools like the [UN Partner Portal](#). By the end of 2023, 11 UN agencies were using the Partner Portal. UNHCR finalized the [Programme Handbook for Partners](#), providing guidance on relevant procedures, and introducing enhanced processes for assessing partners' internal controls, including measures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). UNHCR also introduced an enhanced process for assessing internal controls of partners, rolling out a template harmonized with the micro-assessment template used by other UN agencies applying the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). These changes are expected to double the number of partners for which UNHCR will have assessed internal controls and allow for information sharing across UN agencies when working with shared partners.

UNHCR made significant progress in partnership reform in 2023, with increased engagement, improved partnership management frameworks, and enhanced integrity measures, all aimed at better serving displaced and stateless people.



Championing sport for protection - Premier sporting organizations stand with refugees

Some of the world's premier sporting and athletics organizations showed support for forcibly displaced people in 2023. [Fundación Fútbol Club Barcelona](#) collaborated with España con ACNUR to help finance projects in Colombia, Malaysia, Türkiye and Uganda. Barca players Ilkay Gundogan, Aitana Bonmati and Lucy Bronze brought soccer star power to UNHCR events hosted by Goodwill Ambassador Danny Ocean.

Adidas, a partner of UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe, pledged during the Global Refugee Forum to fund sport projects supporting refugees and host communities, supporting UNHCR's Sports 4 Protection programme in Bangladesh, enabling vulnerable groups to participate in sports.

Australia for UNHCR (A4U) worked with FIFA to promote the 2023 Women's World Cup. A4U also partnered with refugee athletes such as Olympian and former refugee Bendere Oboya to promote its refugee and sports campaign. During its annual World Refugee Day lunch, A4U raised funds for sporting facilities in camps. A series of films helped to promote the campaign, including one with Australian rules football player and A4U Ambassador [Akec Makur Chuot](#). [Nottingham Forest FC's](#) partnership with UK for UNHCR garnered support for emergency appeals and national media attention, with social media reaching 283 million impressions and 16 million engagements in the first two months alone. These contributions underscore the profound reach of sports in advancing both the protection and well-being of forcibly displaced individuals globally.

Effective strategic leadership and governance and independent oversight

The Executive Committee (ExCom) and UN Member States were steadfast in their support of UNHCR in 2023. At the annual Pledging Conference in December 2022, Member States pledged record contributions of \$1.53 billion for UNHCR programmes and activities in 2023. The second Global Refugee Forum was held in December in Geneva, mobilizing whole-of-society support and engagement towards the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. It brought together more than 4,000 participants from 168 States and over 425 other stakeholders and partners from around the world, including more than 320 forcibly displaced and stateless persons. An additional 10,000 participants joined the proceedings virtually from 120 countries – a further demonstration of the Forum’s relevance, breadth, and diversity. The Forum saw substantive engagement with some 1,750 pledges of financial, technical, material, and policy support submitted.

Evaluations of UNHCR’s action continued to highlight achievements and lessons learned. Evaluations of UNHCR’s policy implementation, such as the Evaluation of UNHCR’s Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, highlighted UNHCR’s strong comparative advantage on protection and operational effectiveness. It also flagged the need for UNHCR to play a more predictable leadership and coordination role. Emergency responses in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the Ukraine refugee crisis were the focus of three evaluations.

Their recommendations contributed towards the revision of the UNHCR’s Policy and Handbook on Emergency Preparedness and Response. Cash-based interventions, livelihoods, economic inclusion, and UNHCR’s work on shelter and settlements, particularly in West and Central Africa, were key themes of several decentralized evaluations. Results have shown that UNHCR continues to work towards sustainable solutions, working alongside national social protection systems and initiatives for local economic development. The nexus evaluation, in its final year follow-up report, highlighted the importance of UNHCR addressing system-level bottlenecks to economic inclusion. Finally, several joint and inter-agency evaluations with partner

UN agencies have been undertaken to strengthen our partnerships and the delivery of common results. Further, the Evaluation Office developed a new 2024-2027 Evaluation Strategy, focusing on a change across three dimensions: coverage of strategic directions with quality evaluative evidence, capacity to evaluate and use evidence, and culture of evidence and learning.

As the demand on UNHCR and its independent oversight system increased, the Inspector General’s Office (IGO) was a crucial player in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of UNHCR’s oversight and integrity systems. The IGO advanced its strategy by defining the scope of investigations, enhancing investigation delivery, promoting learning and risk prevention, and examining independent oversight data.

In response to the rising volume of misconduct complaints, the IGO implemented several initiatives such as streamlining intake processes, restructuring investigations intake capacity, and utilizing improved software tools for data gathering and analysis. As a result, the IGO was able to process and respond to a high volume of complaints and conduct investigations into allegations of misconduct. The IGO also supported changes such as engagement in the Support Desk for workplace concerns and managing the Speak Up Helpline to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

The IGO managed internal online dashboards for planning and tracking recommendations, issued strategic reports and analysis, and provided comprehensive training sessions for UNHCR operations and partners. This was done to advance awareness and accountability on assurance and integrity issues. To ensure a robust independent oversight system, the IGO coordinated among the internal and external oversight providers, which contributed to meaningful choreography of oversight exercises. The IGO also increased engagement with donors to offer assurance of UNHCR’s independent integrity and oversight systems. Through the efforts of the IGO and other oversight mechanisms and evaluations, UNHCR continued to improve its operations and strengthen accountability to better serve displaced and stateless people.



UNHCR and other UN staff take part in an inter-agency visit to a site for internally displaced people who had fled from violent clashes, including heavy artillery bombardment, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in February 2023. More than 117,000 people, mainly women and children, fled into Masisi Territory in the space of a week. © UNHCR/Blaise Sanyila

Strategic partnerships

UNHCR's impact is vastly magnified by its partnerships with other organizations. Some partners bring specialized expertise, some have a dedicated local workforce with unparalleled knowledge of particular areas or communities, some have networks of influence that are invaluable for mobilizing wider support. The depth and breadth of UNHCR's partnerships was evident at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2023, which showed the scale and momentum of collaboration.

In 2023, UNHCR and UNICEF signed a Strategic Collaboration Framework, building on the Blueprint that they jointly implemented between 2020 and 2022. The new Framework includes goals in areas such as child protection, education, social protection, water and sanitation, data, and ending childhood statelessness. An evaluation concluded that the Blueprint had done what it set out to do but the Framework had the potential to strengthen the effectiveness of the partnership further, if States take steps towards the necessary legal and policy changes.

UNHCR and WFP collaborated widely on basic needs and cash assistance, sharing technical expertise via their Joint Hub. In late 2023, they launched a Joint Analytical Framework to better understand forcibly displaced people's ability to meet their basic needs. UNHCR and ILO agreed a new Joint Action Plan for 2023-2025, setting the priorities for advancing an inclusive world of work in forced displacement contexts.

UNHCR's collaboration with IOM underscores the importance of taking a route-based approach to displacement and migration and offers a set of concrete measures that States and other stakeholders can implement with the support of UNHCR and IOM. Major routes in 2023 included the path through Panama's Darien jungle, the risky journeys towards and across the Mediterranean Sea, and the land route southwards to South Africa. A route-based approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by refugees and migrants and offers targeted assistance that can

lead to effective protection, sustainable solutions, and legal pathways. Collaborative initiatives are essential in addressing the complex issues surrounding mixed movements while ensuring that the rights and needs of refugees and migrants are met with dignity and respect.

At the Global Refugee Forum, the “UN Common Pledge 2.0”, co-led by UNHCR with UNDCO and OCHA, reflected a strong commitment to advance refugee inclusion in UN plans and national systems and ensure their access to decent work. With over 100 commitments from various UN partners and UN country teams, the pledge aimed to impact the lives of millions. The pledge brings a transformative approach to partnerships, especially via its country-level component, and the involvement of development actors in the protection and inclusion of refugees.

Refugee Response Plans (RRPs) enable UNHCR and its partners to better coordinate large and complex refugee responses by providing an overarching vision and coherent engagement of RRP partners. In 2023, the eight regional RRP mobilized over 1,470 partners to help protect and assist 22 million displaced people and supported 12.5 million people from host communities, with \$4.575 billion received. Regional RRP were issued for Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Sudan and Ukraine. UNHCR and IOM co-led the joint response plan (JRP) for the Rohingya humanitarian crisis in Bangladesh. Established mechanisms such as the 3RP for the Syria crisis (co-led with UNDP) and the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP) for refugees and migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (co-led with IOM) raised resources and ensured linkages between humanitarian action, resilience activities and development approaches.

Since 2016, most RRP have seen a growing number of contributing partners. In the South Sudan Regional RRP, the yearly average number of actors per country almost doubled between 2016 and 2023, increasing from 16 to 30. In the Afghanistan Regional RRP, the number of actors nearly tripled from 2021 to 2023, from seven to 18. The Rohingya JRP had the highest number of partners, 59 in 2023.

The Regional RRP also include more local and national NGOs, faith-based organizations, refugee-led and women-led organizations, bringing greater knowledge of the local context. In 2023, on average, 31% of partners were local or national rather than international. The RMRP showed the highest growth of local involvement, with the average share of local actors going from 7% to 51% between 2019 and 2023. Increasing the number and diversity of partners helps to design more accessible and inclusive refugee responses that better meet the needs of those most in need in a more sustainable manner.

These partnerships and collective efforts achieve tangible results. In 2023, 2.18 million people were reached as part of the Venezuela Regional Migrants and Refugee Response Plan; 179,640 households were reached with non-food items as part of the RRP for refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo; 119,308 people were supported with counselling on assistance and services, registration, documentation and global protection as part of the Rohingya JRP; 1.3 million individuals were provided with food, cash or mixed assistance through the Sudan RRP and 874,200 children participated in non-formal education programmes as part of the Ukraine RRP.

UNHCR has been at the forefront in establishing platforms for inclusive dialogue to allow for forcibly displaced and stateless peoples’ voices to shape policymaking. In 2023, the collaboration with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and various NGOs networks led to the organization of seven regional consultations with over 1,500 participants on the theme of “Solutions with a focus on inclusion and gender equality”.

UNHCR's commitment to localization is indicative of the strategic shift towards empowering local organizations and communities, particularly those led by forcibly displaced and stateless people. In 2023, in consultation with partners, UNHCR initiated the development of operational localization guidelines, which aim to set the standards of its localization approach. These guidelines make certain that the voices and expertise of local actors can shape and are integral to the decision-making processes, thereby leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes in humanitarian responses.

A significant step towards localization was the multi-stakeholder pledge developed by UNHCR and ICVA for the GRF 2023. This initiative not only incorporated concrete funding commitments but also emphasized capacity-sharing, inclusion and enhancing coordination among various actors. A substantial pledge of \$104 million made by more than 36 stakeholders to support 470 local organizations, more than 200 of them led by people who have experienced forced displacement firsthand, reflected a commitment to empowering communities directly affected by displacement and statelessness. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and sustainability, as it leverages the unique insights and leadership of those who understand the challenges and needs of their communities best.

The UNHCR Advisory Board, led by forcibly displaced and stateless people, engaged in consultations on UNHCR's new child protection policy, its livelihoods and economic inclusion strategy for 2023-2027, and guidance on the inclusion of local organizations in the refugee coordination model. The selection of 70 experts with lived experience of forced displacement and statelessness by the Advisory Board to attend the GRF in 2023 underscored the commitment to meaningful participation. Furthermore, the Advisory Board's engagement with various multi-stakeholder pledges and its leadership in developing a joint refugee statement—endorsed by over 172 local organizations—exemplified a collaborative effort to advocate for the rights and needs of refugees.

UNHCR's Refugee-led Innovation Fund made initial disbursements of \$750,000 for 17 projects in 2023 and prepared to allocate an additional \$1.2 million to 26 projects in 2024. This initiative not only provides financial resources but also offers mentorship and technical support, fostering a community of innovation that can generate sustainable, positive change within refugee communities.

Following its launch in November 2022, UNHCR's sport strategy, "More than a game", was rolled out across 17 country operations, driving positivity in communities by increasing opportunities for sport and play-based activities and by assisting refugees with elite talent to reach their potential. UNHCR engaged with the sports world in 2023, including through its partnerships with adidas, ANTA Group, FIFA, the European Club Association and many others, to communicate, advocate and use sport as a diplomatic and fund-mobilization tool in support of displaced and stateless communities. The strategy provided new project opportunities in countries like Bangladesh and Malawi and will bring further expansion in the coming year.

Collaborations with the world of soccer have grown significantly through partnerships with Football Club Barcelona, UEFA and FIFA, which are reflective of the increasing role that sport can play in advocacy and change. Football provides excellent opportunities for positive storytelling, helping to shift the narrative around refugees, and promote messages of unity and peace. In 2023, the UNHCR/UEFA Unity Euro Cup grew from 8 to 16 mixed refugee and host community teams, engaging more of UEFA's 55 National Associations. The "Unite for peace" campaign during the FIFA Women's World Cup spoke to the need to address the root causes of displacement. Partnerships with World Athletics, the European Olympic Committee, and the Olympic Refugee Foundation have enabled refugees to participate in global sporting events, such as the World Athletics Championships in Hungary and the European Games in Poland.

With the Scort Foundation and the Olympic Refugee Foundation, UNHCR established a multi-stakeholder reference group to develop a new sport pledge for the Global Refugee Forum, under the banner of the Sport for Refugees Coalition. The multi-stakeholder pledge on sport for protection and inclusion was backed by more than 140 stakeholders and it is expected that by 2027 more than \$60 million will have been committed, positively impacting a million people through sport and contributing to UNHCR's advocacy and policy objectives.

CREDITS

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The maps in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UNHCR concerning the legal status of any country or territory or area, of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

Data in this report are drawn from the most recent statistics available to UNHCR, and from other United Nations agencies. For any corrigenda found subsequent to publication, please visit the Global Report page on the Global Focus website (<https://reporting.unhcr.org/global-report-2023>).

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Cover photo:

Sudanese refugee Hawa, 40, stands at her shelter at the Kurmuk transit centre in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of northwestern Ethiopia. The mother-of-ten fled the violence in Sudan with her children and 80-year-old mother in June last year |

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