

# Indonesia

February 2025

**12,379 people** are registered with UNHCR, of whom **69% are adults, 29% are children and 2% are elderly**. Of those over 18, 71% are men and 29% are women. Among the children, 51% are boys and 49% are girls.

**13% of refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia are registered with a specific need**, including people with a disability, unaccompanied or separated refugees and children at risk, people with a serious medical condition, the elderly and single parents with children.

The number of refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia fluctuates, particularly due to the maritime arrival of Rohingya refugees and subsequent onward movements. In 2024, more than 780 Rohingya refugees arrived by boat in Aceh and North Sumatera.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

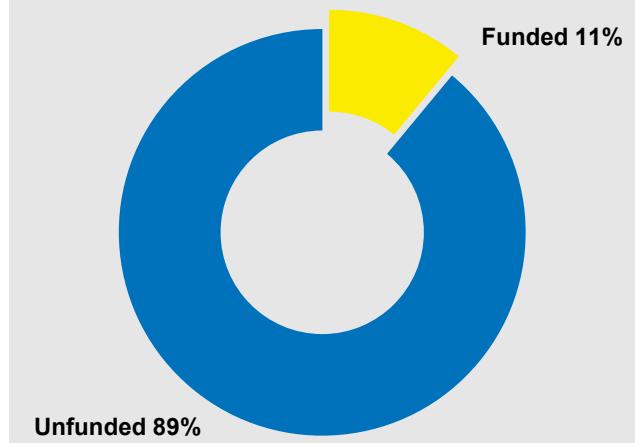


\* source: UNHCR statistical report February 2025

## 2025 FUNDING

**USD 17.2 M**

requested for UNHCR's response in Indonesia



## UNHCR PRESENCE

### Staff:

- 35 National Staff
- 7 International Staff
- 44 Affiliated Work Force

### Offices:

- 1 Country Office - Jakarta
- 5 Field locations - Aceh, Medan, Pekanbaru, Tanjung Pinang, Makassar



A refugee boy from Sudan attends a local elementary school. In Indonesia, refugee children have access to education in accredited national schools. ©UNHCR.

## Protection

While Indonesia is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, refugee protection is embedded within domestic law, including the 1945 Constitution, the 1999 Human Rights Law, and the 2016 Presidential Regulation on the Handling of Refugees. Indonesia generally respects the right to seek asylum and adheres to the principle of non-refoulement. UNHCR is working on advancing opportunities for sustainable refugee participation in Indonesia, focusing on improving access to self-reliance and meaningful inclusion into national education, health, civil registration, justice, and social systems.

UNHCR<sup>1</sup> supports the Government of Indonesia by undertaking core refugee protection functions, including registration, refugee status determination, gender-based violence prevention and response, child protection, legal protection, and the pursuit of durable solutions. Indonesia's National Refugee Task Force, established in 2019, plays a key role in overseeing refugee affairs. Led by Deputy V in the Coordinating Ministry for Political and Security Affairs, the task force includes members from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and various security-focused entities. Several local refugee task forces in refugee-hosting provinces are active and serve as important counterparts.

Indonesia is not a party to the 1954 Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons or the 1961 Convention on Reduction of Statelessness. UNHCR advocates for universal birth registration for all children of marginalized groups, including refugee children, and works closely with the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registry. Presidential Regulation No. 96 Year 2018 and the Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 108 Year 2019 provide the legal framework for refugee children to obtain birth certificates, as confirmed by the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registry of the Ministry of Home Affairs. For more information on UNHCR's protection response and priorities in Indonesia, please see our latest protection brief.

## Working with Partners

UNHCR works with a range of partners in Indonesia, notably IOM, Yayasan Cita Wadah Swadaya (YCWS), Yayasan Guru Belajar (YGB), Yayasan Kemanusiaan Madani Indonesia (YKMI) and Yayasan Relief Islami Indonesia (YRII) across several areas of protection and assistance. UNHCR also works with non-governmental organizations, civil society, refugee-led organizations, and other UN agencies to advocate for and support the rights of the refugee population.

The [UN Common Pledge](#) offers opportunities to strengthen the protection environment in Indonesia. At the [2023 Global Refugee Forum](#) (GRF), several agencies in the UN Country Team (UNHCR, IOM, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP, ILO, UNICEF, FAO, and UNESCO) pledged to provide guidance, technical support, and advocacy to enable refugee inclusion in Indonesia in four key areas: education, health, self-reliance, and birth registration. UNHCR will continue to work closely with these agencies to secure inclusive policies and an enabling protection environment in the country.

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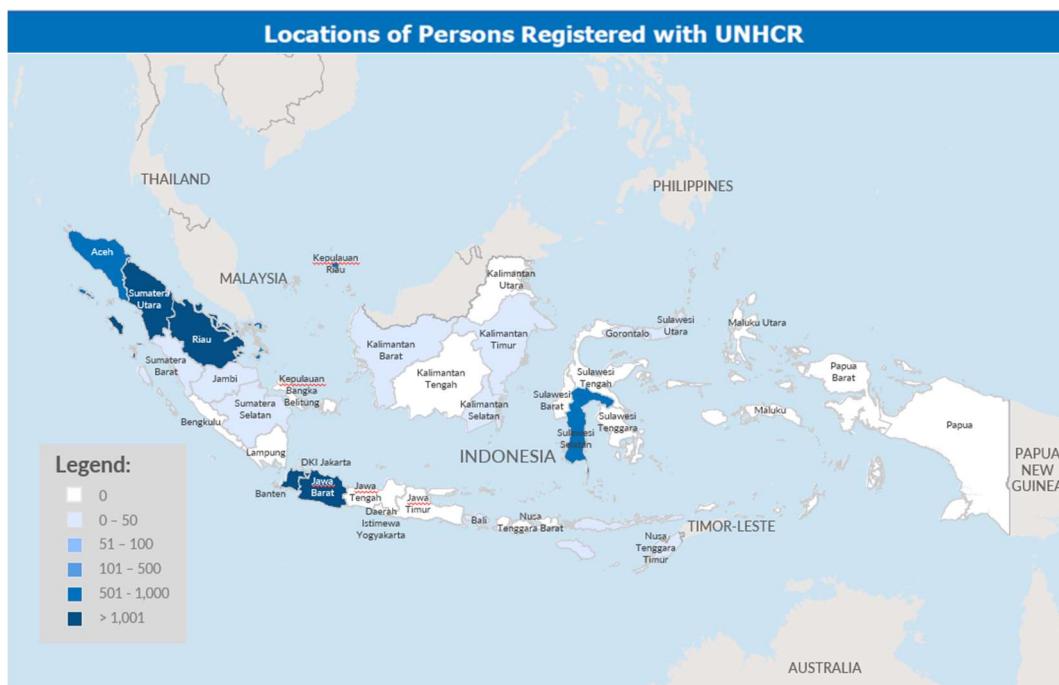
<sup>1</sup> UNHCR has had a host country agreement with the Government of Indonesia since 1979.

# Main Activities

## Registration and Documentation

UNHCR registers people seeking asylum in Indonesia on behalf of the Government of Indonesia and issues UNHCR identity documentation. Registration interviews are primarily conducted in-person to verify biometric data and relevant records. Most registration interviews take place at the Reception Centre in Jakarta or during visits by the respective teams to people residing outside the greater Jakarta area. Throughout 2024, UNHCR Indonesia registered 2,180 people (1,072 cases), including 787 Rohingya refugees registered during emergency registration missions following seven boat disembarkations in Aceh and North Sumatra earlier in the year and the last quarter of 2024.

Following initial registration, UNHCR Indonesia provides continuous registration services to ensure updates on vulnerability, case composition, marriages, births, deaths, contact information, etc. are recorded in UNHCR's database to ensure accurate information is available on refugees and asylum-seekers in the country.



## Refugee Status Determination

In the absence of comprehensive national refugee laws and a national refugee status determination (RSD) process, UNHCR conducts RSD in Indonesia. As asylum-seekers have access to the same rights and services as refugees, UNHCR uses RSD strategically for people with an immediate third country solution that requires refugee recognition (such as resettlement and some complementary pathways), cases with heightened protection concerns, and cases requiring clarification through the RSD process. UNHCR also conducts RSD as part of its emergency response to boat arrivals to identify those in need of international protection. In 2024, UNHCR Indonesia finalized RSD decisions for 287 people.

## Child Protection

UNHCR and its partners provide case management assistance to support children who are unaccompanied or separated from their primary caregivers, or who are suffering from violence, exploitation, and neglect.

UNHCR works with partners, including Government entities, to assist children with heightened protection needs by providing legal assistance, safety and security measures, and psychological and health interventions as necessary. UNHCR works with YCWS, its implementing partner, to provide assistance to unaccompanied children in semi-independent living care arrangements, where unaccompanied children are accommodated in rented rooms and provided with basic assistance. In response to the emergency situation in Aceh, UNHCR is conducting best interest assessments for the large number of unaccompanied children, child spouses, and other children at risk to better understand their needs and determine the most appropriate protection approach.

### **Gender-Based Violence**

UNHCR conducts case management for survivors of gender-based violence and refers them to support services with their consent. Assistance may include medical care, psychosocial support, temporary safe accommodation, help with police reporting and legal processes, and interventions to protect affected children, if required. UNHCR and YCWS also run a 24-hour gender-based violence hotline for survivors.

### **Legal Support**

UNHCR provides support to refugees and asylum-seekers facing legal protection concerns, including people seeking international protection at air and sea borders who are unable to access Indonesian territory, those at risk of deportation/refoulement, victims or accused perpetrators of crimes, and others with legal concerns in the country. The Legal Protection Hotline is available for people in emergency situations, particularly those at risk of refoulement, arrest, or detention.

### **Cash-Based Assistance**

UNHCR provides cash assistance to a small number of extremely vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers to help meet basic needs. Together with partners, UNHCR conducts socio-economic assessments for cases identified as requiring financial assistance. Cases with heightened needs are presented to a socio-economic and health panel (comprised of YCWS, Jesuit Refugee Services, and UNHCR) to determine eligibility for the cash programme. Those who are eligible receive up to six months of cash assistance, with re-assessments required thereafter to determine ongoing need. UNHCR is currently providing monthly cash assistance to some 362 of the most vulnerable refugees.

### **Economic Empowerment**

Refugees are not legally permitted to work in Indonesia. UNHCR advocates for refugees to have access to livelihoods opportunities and works with partners to create community empowerment and self-reliance programmes that benefit both Indonesians and refugees. These programmes include vocational training and entrepreneurship initiatives that promote economic development in Indonesia. At the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in December 2019, the Government of Indonesia pledged support for refugee productivity and empowerment activities. This commitment was reaffirmed at the second GRF in December 2023. In September 2023, the Ministry of Manpower issued a Circular Note permitting refugee participation in skills training programmes at Government training centres. Both the Circular and GRF commitment serve as pivotal entry points to advance economic empowerment for refugees.

### **Education**

The Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology issued a Circular Note in 2019, amended in 2022, allowing refugees and asylum-seekers to access primary and secondary formal and informal education within the national education system. Enrolment in local schools requires a valid UNHCR

document and proficiency in the Indonesian language. UNHCR and its partners provide preparation classes, covering the Indonesian language and basic skills (reading, writing, and math), along with additional support such as tuition fees, transport allowance and school supplies to assist children in accessing local schools. IOM similarly supports refugee children living in IOM accommodation. Challenges in increasing enrolment rates among refugee children include limited interest in learning Indonesian, financial barriers, resettlement expectations, inability to obtain official documentation certifying school completion (due to the lack of an Indonesian identification number), and inadequate physical space in classrooms to accommodate non-Indonesian children. As a result of these and other challenges, only 830 refugee children out of approximately 3,000 school-aged children are enrolled in accredited national schools so far.

### **Health**

UNHCR is committed to ensuring refugees and asylum-seekers have access to life-saving and life-sustaining health services. To achieve this, UNHCR continues to advocate with the Ministry of Health for the inclusion of refugees in the national health system, including access to national health insurance, working towards the achievement of **UN Sustainable Development Goal** (SDG) 3 (Good Health and Well-Being). All registered asylum-seekers and refugees have access to low-cost primary health care at the local community health centres (PUSKESMAS) managed by the Government of Indonesia. People requiring emergency or specialised health treatment may receive financial support from UNHCR through its health partner YCWS, within the parameters of established guidelines and budgetary restrictions. UNHCR coverage is limited to critical interventions, mental health services, immunization, maternal care, and paediatric care. In 2024, UNHCR granted assistance to 1,506 healthcare requests including outpatient, inpatient, psychiatric, counselling, and antiretroviral therapy needs.

### **Solutions – Resettlement**

UNHCR Indonesia continues to identify and submit refugees for resettlement consideration. In 2024, 1,117 refugees departed Indonesia to third countries through the resettlement solution. UNHCR seeks to ensure the most vulnerable refugees are prioritized for resettlement consideration, assessing heightened specific needs and protection concerns, as well as length of stay in the country when identifying cases for submission.

### **Solutions – Complementary Pathways**

UNHCR Indonesia is working to expand access to complementary pathways for refugees and provides information and guidance to those eligible for these programmes. Complementary pathways have increased in recent years, from no individual departures on these pathways in 2020 to over 350 departures in 2024. UNHCR recognizes the link between access to education, skills building, and empowerment activities in Indonesia, with improved access to education and labour mobility pathways in third countries. Successful outcomes in these pathways reinforce and enhance advocacy with Indonesian authorities on the importance of providing access to opportunities while in Indonesia.

Since mid-2021, UNHCR has collaborated with Talent Beyond Boundaries on a project that matches refugee candidates in Indonesia with employers in Australia and Canada for employment opportunities and pathways to residency through labour mobility. In 2024, 281 people departed via sponsorship pathways, 20 refugees departed to a third country for family reunification, and 50 refugees departed to Australia and Canada under labour mobility programmes.

## Solutions – Voluntary Repatriation

UNHCR facilitates voluntary repatriation for refugees and asylum-seekers who wish to return to their countries of origin, often in close cooperation with IOM through its Assisted Voluntary Return programme. In 2024, 128 refugees voluntarily repatriated from Indonesia, primarily to Iraq and Sri Lanka. Ongoing conflicts and human rights violations in countries of origin have impacted voluntary repatriation, as many refugees are unable to safely return home thereby limiting interest in repatriation.

## Response to Rohingya Refugee Maritime Arrivals

Boats carrying Rohingya refugees continue to disembark on the shores of Aceh and North Sumatra. Over 3,000 Rohingya refugees landed in Indonesia on 24 boats in 2023 and 2024. Due to continued deterioration in the security situation in Myanmar and instability in Bangladesh, UNHCR anticipates that Rohingya refugees will continue to seek safety and protection on Indonesian shores. UNHCR works closely with Indonesian authorities, IOM, and other implementing and operational partners to maintain protection, services, and assistance for refugees and support to the Indonesian communities hosting them. Updates on Rohingya maritime arrivals are available through the UNHCR Indonesia [Rohingya Boat Arrival Update](#).

## Private Sector Partnership

The Private Sector Partnerships Service (PSP), part of the Division of External Relations in HQ and the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, works with different UNHCR Regional Bureaux and Country Offices to facilitate private sector funding for UNHCR and to raise awareness within the public on refugee issues. In 2024, PSP Indonesia successfully secured over USD 1.128 million and recruited 6,000 new donors from its digital fundraising programs, Face to Face (F2F), multichannel fundraising, and its Islamic Philanthropy sector.

## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the support of:

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For more information, please read the 2025 Global Appeal.

## CONTACTS

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