

Burkina Faso

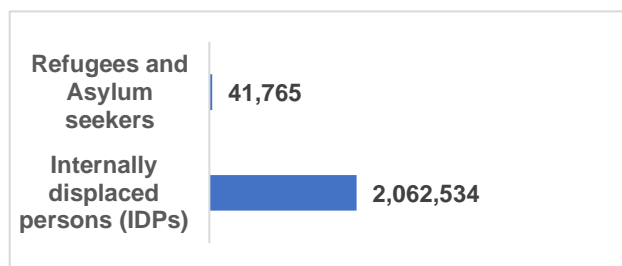
January- June 2025

As 30 of June 2025, Burkina Faso host **41,765** refugees, mainly from Mali and over 2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) reported by authorities as of 31 March 2023. The **humanitarian situation remains dire**, in many regions, though government-reported **returns** of more than **1 million people** by 31 March 2025 indicate encouraging **signs of progress**.

The **crisis** has **overwhelmed national and humanitarian response capacities**, exposing forcibly displaced persons to **heightened protection risks**. **Sustained support is essential to strengthen service delivery, meet urgent needs, and advance durable solutions** in both displacement and return areas.

The **suspension** of U.S. **humanitarian funding** in January 2025, coupled with a **broader funding decline** from other partners, has created **critical gaps**. In this context, UNHCR has **refocused on life-saving protection** for the most vulnerable. Without urgent support, assistance will **stall**, **local partnerships may weaken**, and **progress toward sustainable / long-term solutions** will be **jeopardized**.

DISPLACED POPULATION IN BURKINA FASO AS OF 30 JUNE 2025



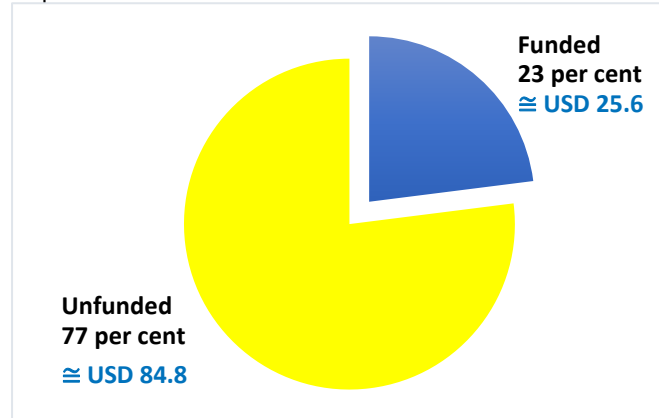
* Registered refugees and asylum-seekers include 56 per cent women 44 per cent men, and they live in the Sahel (Soum, Liptako), North (Yaadga), Boucle du Mouhoun (Bankui, Sourou), Centre (Kadiogo) & Plateau Central (Oubri), Grand-West (Guiriko, Tannounyan, Dioro) and East (Tapoa, Goumou, Sirba) regions.

** IDP figures refer to IDPs across the country recorded as of 31 March 2023 by CONASUR.

FUNDING (AS OF 30 JUNE 2025)

USD 110.4 million

requested for the Burkina Faso situation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff: 157

105 National Staff

37 International Staff

15 Affiliate staff

Offices:

- 1 Branch Office in Ouagadougou
- 2 Sub Offices in Kaya & Dori
- 3 Field Offices in Bobo Dioulasso, Ouahigouya & Fada

1 Field unit in Djibo

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Working with Partners

- UNHCR collaborates with 18 partners, including government agencies, UN bodies, NGOs, and development actors, to deliver protection and durable solutions for forcibly displaced persons and those at risk of statelessness. Guided by its 2022–2026 Multi-Year Multi-Partner (MYMP) strategy and localization agenda, UNHCR has significantly expanded engagement with local civil society organizations, increasing from zero to over 30 CSOs by 2025. UNHCR leads the Protection, Shelter/NFI, and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM/GSAT) clusters, ensuring coordinated, inclusive, and protection-centred responses while strengthening links with national systems. Despite rising needs and constrained resources, UNHCR has sustained inter-agency leadership and reinforced partnerships through pooled funding and collaborative efforts.
- Reaffirming its leadership in bringing stakeholders together to address forced displacement, UNHCR co-organized with the Government of Burkina Faso the first International Colloquium on “Forced Displacement in West and Central Africa: Dynamics and Responses” in January 2025. The event brought together over 200 participants, including government officials, researchers, UN entities, CSOs, and forcibly displaced people, and marked a milestone in regional dialogue and cooperation. Co-hosted with the De Mello Research Chair at Joseph the Ki-Zerbo University of Ouagadougou, the colloquium fostered cross-sectoral exchanges and helped shape strategic responses on protection frameworks, durable solutions, and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus. The initiative highlighted the importance of knowledge partnerships in informing evidence-based policymaking, strengthening local capacities, and promoting inclusive, sustainable approaches to displacement in a highly complex regional context.
- In May 2025, the National Commission for Refugee (CONAREF), with technical support from UNHCR, organized a national workshop to review Burkina Faso’s commitments made at the December 2023 Global Refugee Forum (GRF). The workshop assessed progress made in 2024 and early 2025, updated the monitoring framework and operational action plan, and outlined perspectives through 2027. The workshop strengthened interinstitutional coordination and positioned Burkina Faso as the only country in the sub-region to conduct a mid-term review ahead of UNHCR’s June 2025 regional stocktaking. Key recommendations included operationalizing the national follow-up committee, better aligning technical and financial partners with commitments, establishing a structured data collection system, and increasing efforts to mobilize resources. These actions aim to ensure effective implementation of the commitments by 2027.
- In May 2025, UNHCR participated in the inaugural Private Sector Forum in Ouagadougou, themed “Building Sustainable and Inclusive Pathways for Development.” Co-organized by the IFC, the Government of Burkina Faso, and COGEF, the event gathered key stakeholders from government, business, and development sectors.

UNHCR showcased its sustainable approach to durable solutions for displaced populations through private sector engagement. During a panel on local economic development, attended by the Minister of Humanitarian Action, UNHCR emphasized the critical link between humanitarian response and inclusive development. Bilateral discussions with IFC and leading companies followed, opening avenues for operational collaboration. UNHCR's involvement reinforced its role as a strategic partner in advancing socio-economic inclusion in protracted crisis settings.

Main Activities

Protection

- UNHCR leads the protection response in Burkina Faso, leveraging Project 21 (P21) for protection monitoring to guide advocacy, programming, and humanitarian planning. Between January and June 2025, P21 recorded a notable decline in reported protection incidents—from 568 in Q1 to 329 in Q2—suggesting reduced harm to civilians. However, this trend should be interpreted with caution, as access constraints in four high-risk regions, following the suspension of an implementing partner, limited data collection. Protection risks remain high: 20 per cent of household heads reported feeling unsafe, mostly due to terrorism; nearly one-third of households faced movement restrictions, often linked to IED threats. Urgent needs identified by key informants include food (82 per cent), shelter, and water, underscoring the continued necessity of a protection-centred humanitarian response.

Registration and documentation

- UNHCR strengthens access to asylum, legal identity, and civil documentation for displaced and stateless persons. Over the period under review, over 354 new asylum-seekers were registered, and nearly 2,120 refugee identity cards were issued or renewed to support access to essential services. The first 2025 session of the Eligibility Committee issued key decisions and closed 146 pending asylum claims. To prevent statelessness during the period under review, nearly 10,000 birth certificates were delivered and over 5,800 individuals registered for national IDs in coordination with authorities and nearly 1,200 beneficiaries have received their cards. UNHCR also supported the creation of a Civil Documentation Working Group and engaged with national institutions to reinforce legal safeguards and promote accession to the 1961 Convention.

Education

- UNHCR supported access to formal education and skills development for displaced populations with encouraging results. Refugee students achieved a 90 percent pass rate at the primary level, exceeding the national average, with girls standing out at 91 per cent. However, performance at the junior secondary level dropped to 46 per cent, highlighting the need for continued support. In parallel, targeted partnerships with the Francophone University Agency, SIMPLON, the Data Protection Authority and Orange

enabled 14 displaced youth to earn digital skills certifications. A dedicated hackathon promoted innovation in data protection and strengthened digital inclusion among displaced communities.

Health

- UNHCR reinforced the national health system capacity and sustained refugee access to care amid critical challenges. In support of the Ministry of Health's efforts to reduce maternal mortality, UNHCR donated more than \$11,000 in medical equipment to enhance obstetric care in high-need areas. Despite severe funding gaps and system collapse in remote regions like Djibo and Dori, where 70 per cent of refugees reside, nearly 3,300 individuals received curative consultations. However, rising home births, staff shortages, and limited access to facilities continue to threaten health outcomes. UNHCR and partners identified 55 cases of severe acute malnutrition during the lean season and relied on WFP food aid to assist over 40 per cent of the refugee population. Sustained support and funding remain critical to preserving essential health and nutrition services.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

- During the first half of 2025, UNHCR delivered life-saving shelter and NFIs to over 32,000 displaced persons across multiple regions including Sahel (Soum, Liptako), Centre-North (Kuilse), North (Yaadga), East (Tapoa, Goulmou, Sirba), Boucle du Mouhoun (Sourou, Bankui), Cascades (Tannounyan), and Hauts-Bassins (Guiriko). Through a coordinated emergency response, combining direct UNHCR implementation and joint deployments with the inter-agency Emergency Response Team (ERT), more than 6,000 emergency shelters and NFI kits were distributed, strengthening protection and safeguarding the dignity of vulnerable families, especially women and children, during the rainy season. This vital assistance helped reduce exposure to protection risks and improve living conditions for displaced populations. However, increasing displacement and funding shortages have limited the ability to fully meet growing needs, forcing UNHCR to reprioritize, focusing on life-saving interventions and to reduce technical monitoring, which affects the long-term quality and sustainability of shelter support.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- **Building Household Resilience and Self-Reliance-** In the first half of 2025, UNHCR and partners supported more than 850 displaced and host community members across the Sahel (Soum, Liptako), Centre-North (Kuilse), East (Tapoa, Goulmou, Sirba), and Hauts-Bassins (Guiriko) regions to strengthen livelihoods. Over 400 people received seeds and compost, improving food security and income through timely planting. In Kaya, a 250m² greenhouse was built and training in soilless, climate-smart agriculture is on-going, enabling year-round vegetable production. Another 430 people, mostly youth and women, completed entrepreneurship and financial literacy training with referrals to microfinance services. UNHCR also facilitated the participation of refugee artisans at the

Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO). Events like FESPACO offer crucial exposure, market access, and income opportunities in a changing cultural and tourism context. By connecting refugees to such platforms, UNHCR fosters economic self-reliance, promotes integration into local value chains, enhances social cohesion, and strengthens long-term livelihood prospects.

Solutions

- **Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Returns-** On 26–27 March 2025, the fourth Lomé Dialogue on national security and refugee protection convened the Governments of Burkina Faso, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, and UNHCR, building on the outcomes of the three previous Dialogues. The meeting aimed to take stock of progress on earlier recommendations. It concluded with a collective reaffirmation of respect for international protection principles, endorsement of 21 recommendations, and agreement to pursue the Dialogue process. Importantly, key new recommendations were proposed to Ministers, paving the way for an inter-ministerial conference as a next step. Among them was the signature of tripartite agreements for the voluntary repatriation of Burkinabe refugees. Participating States also committed to strengthening national asylum systems, particularly refugee status determination, registration, and civil documentation. This joint engagement reinforces the regional protection framework and supports efforts to address the root causes of displacement.
- **Advancing Inclusion in National Systems and Local Integration as a Durable Solution-** UNHCR continues to work with national institutions to promote refugee inclusion in Burkina Faso's systems. In April and May 2025, CONAREF and the Secretariat of the national social registry (RSU) reaffirmed their commitment to including refugees in the RSU, allowing them to access national social protection alongside host communities. Complementing this, at least 85 refugees and asylum-seekers have acquired Burkinabe nationality since 2018—naturalization being the most sustainable local integration pathway. Efforts are ongoing to strengthen data collection and promote naturalization as a viable durable solution.
- **Linking Humanitarian Response to Development Gains–** In alignment with the HDP Nexus and the National Strategy for the Recovery of IDPs and Host Communities, UNHCR has reinforced collaboration with development actors to bridge emergency response and long-term solutions. In 2025, partnerships with the international NGO Direct Aid is expanding access to water and land-based livelihoods in Hauts-Bassins region (Guiriko). A new MoU with the Belgian Development Agency (ENABEL) was signed to enhance community resilience and access to essential services and a joint mission to the Centre-North (Kuilse) identified concrete opportunities in vocational training, entrepreneurship, and support to survivors of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Area-based strategies are also being developed in return zones to transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable recovery. Ongoing dialogue with the World

Bank is also strengthening the use of protection data to inform development planning and ensure the inclusion of forcibly displaced persons in national systems.

Impact of Funding Cuts on the Operation

- The suspension of U.S. humanitarian funding in January 2025 and a general funding crunch following shrinking resources from some partners, has created severe deficits for UNHCR in Burkina Faso, where over 60 per cent of the operation's funding over the past three years came from the U.S. As of mid-year, only 23 per cent of UNHCR's 2025 needs are met. This underfunding is already severely affecting the provision of essential services: refugee access to healthcare has dropped by 50 per cent, legal protection is weakening, exposing women and children to greater risks, and support for persons with specific needs has declined by 93 per cent. Nearly half of all refugee students may be out of school by October, compromising long-term prospects for integration and stability.
- In response, UNHCR has urgently revised its priorities to focus on life-saving interventions and the most vulnerable populations. Shelter assistance has been reduced to only emergency responses, and field monitoring is significantly limited, compromising oversight and quality. The sharp decline in humanitarian capacity is undermining the coherence of the overall response just as needs continue to grow. UNHCR is intensifying advocacy with donors and national authorities, reinforcing local partnerships, and leveraging development and private sector actors to sustain critical services and prevent further deterioration. Urgent donor support is needed to avoid a collapse of protection systems and to maintain essential assistance in this complex and evolving crisis.

Efficiency Measures Adopted by the Operation

- Amid growing needs and significant funding shortfalls, UNHCR has adopted robust efficiency measures to sustain core protection and assistance. These include a strategic focus on life-saving interventions with focus on the most vulnerable people, geographical prioritization of high-impact areas, and enhanced inter-agency coordination. These adjustments have impacted both UNHCR-led responses and services delivered by partners, including national and international NGOs.
- To maximize impact with available resources, UNHCR is pursuing targeted cost-saving measures such as co-location in five UN common premises, with projected savings of USD 242,000 in 2025. Additional efforts to rationalize the fleet and optimize rental and utility costs are expected to save nearly USD 129,000 this year. Building on the 2024 experience, where confirmed savings of over USD 634,000 were reinvested into critical programming, UNHCR is confident in its ability to further optimize resources through these efficiency measures. At the same time, UNHCR is reinforcing its engagement within the HDP Nexus by promoting integrated, cost-effective programming in collaboration with development and financial partners. Continued engagement with national authorities and donors remains essential to maintaining humanitarian access and scaling up sustainable solutions.

Recognition of Donors

UNHCR expresses its sincere gratitude to all donors supporting the response in Burkina Faso, particularly those providing flexible funding, which has been instrumental in sustaining life-saving assistance amid a rapidly evolving crisis. Despite this generous support, only 23 per cent of the USD 110.4 million required in 2025 has been received by mid-year. As needs continue to grow, urgent additional funding is needed to prevent further disruptions and protect the most vulnerable.



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

Australia for UNHCR 4.1 million | Norway 2.8 million | Italy 2.4 million|

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Republic of Korea 16.8 million | Australia 14.3 million | France 13.9 million | Ireland 13.6 million | Private donors in the Republic of Korea 13.4 million |

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External / Donor Relations/Inter-Agency

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