

## OUTCOME AREA 6

Mojtaba, an 18-year-old refugee from Sudan, boards a bus with his family to the airport in Tripoli, Libya. Together with other refugees, they were evacuated to Rwanda through UNHCR's Emergency Transit Mechanism in search of safety and a chance to rebuild their lives. © UNHCR/Ziyad Alhamadi


## Safety and access to justice

For many forcibly displaced and stateless people, detention and barriers to justice, lack of documentation and status, shape daily reality. Despite a 23% funding decrease, UNHCR prioritized legal assistance, detention monitoring and engagement with national authorities to strengthen rule of law institutions, preserve the civilian character of asylum and of refugee sites, prevent arbitrary detention, reduce refoulement risks, address protection risks during mixed and onward movements and strengthen access to justice. These efforts focused on safeguarding access to asylum procedures, the ability to obtain documentation and the availability of effective legal remedies without discrimination.

### Key results

UNHCR sustained access to legal assistance and remedies through adaptive delivery models and institutional partnerships:

#### Core output indicator

 UNHCR and partners provided legal assistance to around **1.4 million** people across 99 countries, a 3% increase from 2024. Those receiving legal assistance included refugees and asylum seekers (56%), returnees (25%), IDPs (15%) and stateless people (1%).

- In Mexico, UNHCR expanded its pro bono engagement to more than 20 law firms, sustaining access to legal representation and strategic litigation for nearly 100,000 refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people.
- In Jordan, UNHCR provided legal assistance to nearly 59,000 refugees and asylum seekers, including legal counselling, documentation support and advice related to freedom of movement, residency and return procedures.

UNHCR carried out protection monitoring and supported legal aid to prevent arbitrary detention and refoulement, while working with partners to improve safety and reduce protection risks:

- In Lebanon, UNHCR strengthened safety and reduced key protection risks – including eviction, gender-based violence and child labour – for persons with specific needs, reaching over 22,800 people with legal counselling and other services, and providing emergency cash assistance to 9,435 families.
- In Türkiye, UNHCR supported access to legal aid through partnership with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations, providing more than 11,500 legal counselling services, and in cooperation with the Justice Academy of Türkiye, trained 177 judges and prosecutors.


UNHCR helped national institutions strengthen justice systems by improving protection monitoring, procedural safeguards and coordination among justice actors:

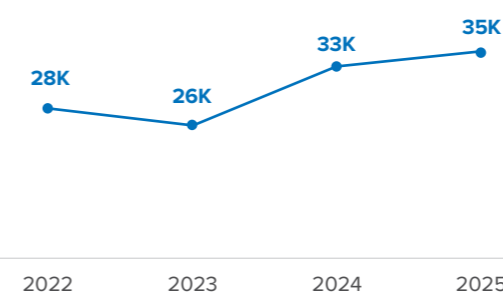
- In Myanmar, protection monitoring and displacement tracking generated data on incidents and trends affecting stateless persons and people at risk of statelessness, particularly Rohingya.
- In Pakistan, UNHCR and partners monitored arrests and detention of Afghan refugees and worked with IOM to enhance protection monitoring, response and advocacy against involuntary returns.
- UNHCR intervened in 18 cases in 13 jurisdictions: 16 cases before national courts in 12 countries, and two before regional courts. UNHCR's interventions addressed access to territory and asylum procedures, the principle of non-refoulement, provisions of the 1951 Convention, refugees' socio-economic rights and the right to family unity.

### Challenges

Restrictive, security-focused asylum and migration policies increased risks such as detention and refoulement for people in need of international protection. Limited UNHCR access to detention facilities hindered monitoring and legal intervention. Funding shortfalls and insufficient legal aid capacity affected progress in safety and access to justice, while overstretched or ineffective justice systems delayed or limited effective remedies.

### Core outcome indicator

 **Number of people arrested or detained related to immigration control or legal status**



Publicly available data on the number of people detained in relation to their legal or immigration status is lacking for most countries and often not recorded in national statistics. In 2025, at least 34,600 people across 38 countries were arrested or detained in relation to immigration control or their legal status. Nearly 97% were refugees and asylum-seekers, and 3% were stateless people.

### Financial overview

#### Global expenditure and budget for Safety and access to justice

- With the funds available, UNHCR could spend **\$119 million** towards budgeted needs of **\$325 million**.
- 23% decrease** in expenditure compared with 2024
- \$207 million** of unmet needs or **64%** of the budget.
- 37%** of total expenditure under this outcome area, or **\$44 million**, was funded by flexible funding, including **\$22 million** of unearmarked funding.

#### Safety and access to justice: largest operations by expenditure

These operations accounted for **\$83 million** or **70%** of global expenditure for this area in 2025

