



OUTCOME AREA 9

A Sudanese refugee family in Ajuong Thok camp near Jamjang, South Sudan, sits beside their new durable shelter, built with KOICA funding, which provides safe housing and stability after displacement caused by the conflict in Sudan.

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Sustainable housing and settlements



In 2025, expenditure under this outcome area reduced by 27%, even though access to safe, habitable and affordable housing remained a central determinant of protection. UNHCR prioritized emergency shelter, critical repairs, settlement planning and energy interventions to mitigate life-threatening risks and improve living conditions in camps, settlements and displacement-affected communities.

Core output indicator

2.1 million people received shelter and housing assistance in 57 countries, a 21% decrease from 2024. Of these, 63% were refugees and asylum-seekers and 22% IDPs.

Key results

- Over 310,000 people received emergency shelter assistance, including in Uganda, where emergency and transitional shelter interventions addressed overcrowding and deteriorating shelter conditions in transit centers and settlement settings.
- UNHCR provided cash assistance for shelter to more than 260,000 people, including in Afghanistan and Ethiopia. In addition, 9,000 durable shelters were rehabilitated or constructed in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda.
- UNHCR helped 55,000 households repair or upgrade their shelters. In Lebanon, this included weatherproofing, shelter upgrades and emergency repairs in informal tented settlements, urban areas and collective centers, helping reduce acute health and protection risks for displaced populations.

- Investments in settlements and infrastructure improved roads, drainage and communal facilities across hundreds of sites. This helped people move more safely, strengthened climate resilience and improved access to services. Across Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where land degradation increases the risk of floods and landslides, UNHCR supported the planting of more than 1.3 million trees and the rehabilitation of 150 hectares of land.
- In Bangladesh, UNHCR strengthened integrated settlement planning through multi-hazard risk assessments, safer shelter designs and site-level infrastructure upgrades to reduce disaster risks in densely populated camps.
- UNHCR also partnered with Deltares to assess [flood adaptation in Ethiopia and South Sudan](#), showing that proactive investments reduce risks and improve safety, while offering a replicable framework for resilient settlements.
- In Mauritania, UNHCR upgraded energy systems for four health-care facilities serving approximately 80,000 people, improving the reliability of electricity for essential health services, including telemedicine, cold chain support and extended service hours.

- UNHCR expanded access to energy and lighting in camps and settlements to improve safety and protection outcomes. In Niger, UNHCR distributed subsidized solar kits and provided solar home systems and lighting kits to 9,000 households.
- In 16 countries, UNHCR retained its shelter cluster coordination role, supporting partners to deliver safe shelter and settlements that meet the protection needs of IDPs.

Challenges

Persistent funding shortfalls and rising construction costs limited provision of shelter assistance, including the transition from emergency shelter to durable housing, and reduced investment in climate-resilient solutions. Recurrent climate shocks – including flooding and severe weather – proved the need for mitigation and protection measures as shelters and settlement infrastructure were repeatedly damaged, diverting resources towards emergency repairs. Housing, land and property constraints restricted investment in durable housing solutions, particularly for returnees and IDPs. Insecurity, access constraints and rapid displacement dynamics disrupted implementation, monitoring and continuity of shelter interventions in high-risk contexts.



Turning plastic waste into low-cost shelter solutions in Lebanon

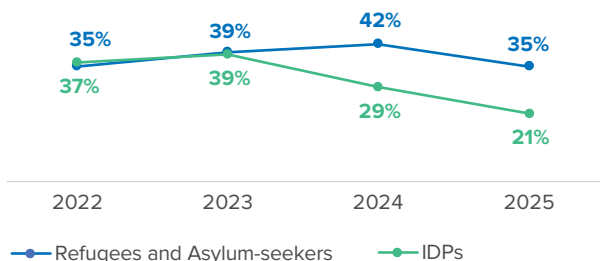


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Plastic sheeting from temporary shelters is often burned or discarded, while demand for sustainable shelters continues to outstrip available resources. With support from the [Environment and Climate Action Innovation Fund](#), UNHCR in Lebanon tested a recycling process that transforms waste plastic sheeting into shelter components. Its first product – a lightweight portable door made from recovered plastic – proved five times more durable and 30% cheaper than new doors. UNHCR installed the recycled doors for 300 families, who reported improved privacy, security and protection from drafts and cold. The project prevented 7,800 kg of plastic waste being discarded, established a local recycling workshop to scale production and supported a new pilot to test further shelter applications for recycled plastic.

Core outcome indicator

Proportion of people living in habitable and affordable housing



In 2025, 35% of refugees and asylum-seekers were living in habitable and affordable housing, a decline from 42% in 2024. Among IDPs, this rate was 21%, down from 29% in 2024.

Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Sustainable housing and settlements

- With the funds available, UNHCR could spend **\$286 million** towards budgeted needs of **\$1.042 billion**.
- **27% decrease** in expenditure compared with 2024
- **\$756 million** of unmet needs or **73%** of the budget.
- **19%** of total expenditure under this outcome area, or **\$55 million**, was funded by flexible funding, including **\$36 million** of unearmarked funding.

Sustainable housing and settlements: largest operations by expenditure

These operations accounted for **\$222 million** or **78%** of global expenditure for this area in 2025

