



OUTCOME AREA 14

Burundian refugees prepare to return home through UNHCR-supported voluntary repatriation at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, marking a safe and dignified step toward rebuilding their lives after years of displacement in Kenya. © UNHCR/Charity Nzomo

Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration

UNHCR supports refugees who want to return home with counselling and information, travel costs and assistance to meet immediate needs. In 2025, nearly 4.4 million refugees returned, compared with 1.6 million in 2024, including some who returned under adverse circumstances and to fragile contexts. Expenditure under this outcome area also increased, but by only 6%. UNHCR is promoting a systematic and sustainable approach to reintegration before, during and after return. Area-based, multi-sectoral and phased support is critical to link immediate assistance with longer-term reintegration.

Core output indicator

UNHCR provided counselling and/or information on voluntary repatriation to more than **1 million** refugees and asylum-seekers in 66 countries, three times more than in 2024.

Key results

- UNHCR shared information on return conditions and availability of services in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lebanon, Rwanda, the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) and Türkiye. This included information shared through online platforms, such as [Syria is Home](#) and UNHCR Help pages.
- In Afghanistan, UNHCR continued systematic monitoring at crossing points to inform advocacy with governments of host countries and support age, gender and diversity sensitive targeting of assistance, considering the high needs amid unprecedented mass returns of nearly **3 million people**.
- In Türkiye, UNHCR increased its presence at border crossing points and Provincial Directorates of Migration Management to assess the voluntary nature of the returns to Syria.

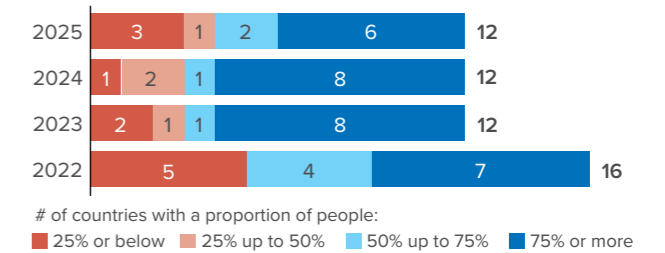
- UNHCR facilitated, organized and supported voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity to Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda and Somalia.
- In Jordan, UNHCR provided financial aid to refugees living in camps, supporting more than 3,200 people planning to return. All refugees who received return assistance also received individual counselling to ensure their decisions were voluntary and well-informed.
- In Syria, UNHCR provided assisted travel for returnees at three border crossings. UNHCR and partners also conducted systematic monitoring of protection needs and risks of more than 30,000 IDP and refugee returnee households and host communities across all 14 governorates.
- In Burundi, UNHCR supported government to facilitate documentation for returnee children and provided equipment and training of staff at transit centres, leading to 95% of returnee children being provided with birth certificates.
- In West and Central Africa, UNHCR and the governments of Chad and Nigeria signed a [tripartite agreement](#) while the revitalization of the Mali-Niger-UNHCR Tripartite Framework enabled the resumption of institutional dialogue and strengthened information-sharing on conditions in areas of return, improving coordination and reaffirming the framework as a central mechanism for supporting voluntary returns.

Challenges

Ongoing insecurity and fragile conditions in areas of origin limited prospects for safe, dignified and sustainable return in many places. Limited government capacity and weak local systems also made it harder for returnees to access services and rights. Gaps in data, monitoring and evidence-based planning constrained targeted and adaptive programming, while insufficient inclusion of returnees in national development frameworks delayed sustainable outcomes. Weak reintegration environments – including short-term assistance – undermined the sustainability of returns. Many people returned in adverse circumstances because of deteriorating conditions in host countries, despite UNHCR’s efforts in appealing to the responsibility of host countries under international refugee law.

Core outcome indicator

Proportion of returnees with legally recognized identity documents or credentials



6 of 12 reporting countries indicated that more than 75% of returnees had legally recognized identity documents or credentials, lower than 8 of 12 countries (67%) in 2024.

Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration

- With the funds available, UNHCR could spend **\$104 million** towards budgeted needs of **\$495 million**.
- **6% increase** in expenditure compared with 2024
- **\$391 million** of unmet needs or **79%** of the budget.
- **48%** of total expenditure under this outcome area, or **\$50 million**, was funded by flexible funding, including almost **\$40 million** of unearmarked funding.

Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration: largest operations by expenditure

These operations accounted for **\$74 million** or **71%** of global expenditure for this area in 2025

