



SITUATION SUMMARY

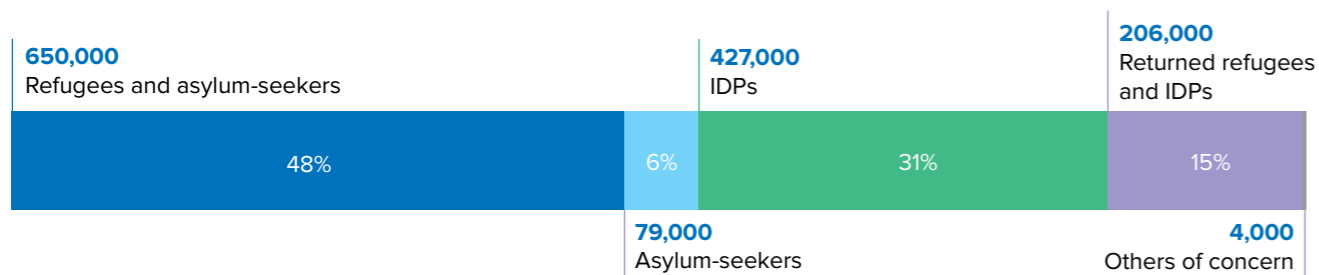
Dieudonné Bekesse and his family, who were refugees in Cameroon, board a bus to voluntarily return home to the Central African Republic. © UNHCR/Myriam NdjengBapouh

The Central African Republic Situation

Country operations involved in the response: Cameroon multi-country office, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo.

2025 year-end population figures

1.4 million Central African refugees in neighbouring countries and IDPs



Context

By the end of 2025, nearly 1.2 million citizens of the Central African Republic (CAR) were forcibly displaced – approximately 11,500 fewer than in 2024 – reflecting gradual returns amid persistent localized insecurity. The number of internally displaced people (IDPs) declined to 427,500, down from 469,900 in 2024, as improved security in parts of the country enabled returns. However, renewed armed group activity in the northeast and southeast forced more than 45,000 people to flee, often for a second time. Some were displaced within the CAR, while others crossed into the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), as insecurity also restricted humanitarian access to affected communities.

By December 2025, more than 738,200 Central African refugees and asylum-seekers were hosted in neighbouring countries, mainly in Cameroon (282,000), DRC (266,400), Chad (144,900), and the Republic of the Congo (33,500), with smaller numbers in Sudan and South Sudan. Despite its own challenges, the CAR hosted around 53,600 refugees and asylum-seekers, including about 40,000 people who fled Sudan since April 2023, further straining already limited host community resources. Statelessness risks remained high, affecting an estimated 1.1 million people, underlining the need to strengthen civil registration and legal identity systems.

UNHCR responded to evolving displacement dynamics by combining humanitarian assistance with longer-term measures to strengthen national systems and promote nationally led responses. Efforts focused on supporting self-reliance, inclusion, and conditions for safe and voluntary returns, despite severe funding constraints. An estimated 21,700 refugees returned to CAR in 2025 – the highest annual figure since 2017 – including 12,900 from Cameroon and 7,400 from DRC, with most returns facilitated by UNHCR.

Since 2017, over 75,000 Central African refugees have returned home through the [CAR Solutions Support Platform](#), which aims to facilitate 300,000 returns by 2028. In parallel, nearly 183,900 IDPs returned to their areas of origin in 2025, placing additional pressure on basic services and reinforcing the need for sustained reintegration support.

UNHCR in action

UNHCR promoted sustainable reintegration in areas of return through area-based approaches linking humanitarian assistance with development investments. In line with the National Durable Solutions Strategy, interventions in the [Baoro development hub](#) included the construction of 100 housing units, the rehabilitation and expansion of two schools and one health facility, and livelihood support benefiting returnees, IDPs and host communities through mixed farmers' cooperatives. Nevertheless, major challenges to sustainable return remained. Basic infrastructure – including schools, health centres, water points and markets – remained weak or absent, while economic opportunities and vocational training continued to be limited, underscoring the need for sustained investment.

UNHCR strengthened protection for forcibly displaced and stateless people through advocacy and support for legal frameworks aimed at reducing statelessness. This included technical assistance to civil registry services in six prefectures and the distribution of 366 birth registration registers. These efforts helped issue 36,600 birth certificates to displaced people and host communities, particularly in remote areas with limited state presence. Although the CAR has not yet acceded to the Statelessness Conventions, implementation of the national action plan intensified, and progress was made on a national study to inform future legal and policy reforms.

Major achievements in the Central African Republic

- 141,600 people received protection services
- 26,000 people received financial aid
- 43,200 people received in-kind assistance
- 14,000 people received shelter and housing assistance
- 11,200 people benefited from specialized gender-based violence programmes
- 12,300 children and caregivers received child protection services

Community-based protection mechanisms remained critical in areas hosting refugees, returnees and IDPs. More than 11,000 people benefitted from specialized programmes addressing violence against women and girls. UNHCR and partners established 13 safe spaces for at-risk women, strengthened community protection committees, and trained 300 local authorities and 120 humanitarian staff on international protection, helping ensure that protection services were embedded in national and community structures.

Localization efforts advanced through a consortium-based partnership model that brought together national and international NGOs and government institutions. Seven projects were implemented through four consortia involving ten national NGOs, four international NGOs and two government partners. Small grants also supported community-based organizations engaged in the prevention of and response to protection incidents affecting people at risk.

Emergency assistance included financial aid to 26,000 people, including returnees, distribution of essential items to 16,500 households, including 6,700 IDPs, and shelter support for 13,100 IDPs. UNHCR also strengthened health, water, sanitation, hygiene, and community services to help restore living conditions and support reintegration.

Despite funding challenges, countries hosting Central African refugees maintained favourable asylum policies, though the majority of refugees and asylum-seekers continued to reside in remote border areas under often precarious conditions.

In Cameroon, UNHCR worked with the Government to issue nearly 11,000 biometric identity cards to Central African refugees, supported more than 117,000 health consultations, and facilitated the enrolment of about 52% of refugee children in primary education in the East and Adamawa regions.

In the DRC, UNHCR and national authorities assisted 201,000 registered Central African refugees – primarily in Nord-Ubangi, Sud-Ubangi, and Bas-Uele – through documentation, education support, financial aid, and community-based protection, despite weak infrastructure in border provinces.

In southern Chad, the Government, UNHCR and partners strengthened inclusion in public systems. Approximately 80% of refugees accessed health services, around 60% of refugee children were enrolled in primary school, and access to civil registration and national identification improved. Nevertheless, poverty levels remained high – at about 84% – reflecting limited livelihood opportunities in refugee-hosting areas.

Coordination and partnerships

In 2025, UNHCR strengthened partnerships with development actors, transforming the humanitarian-development peace nexus into concrete action. Direct funding from the African Development Bank (AFDB) and the European Union supported the multi-year implementation of activities related to the CAR Solutions Support Platform.

The AfDB-funded project focused on strengthening the capacity of the signatories to the Yaoundé Declaration – CAR, DRC, the Republic of Congo, Chad, Cameroon and South Sudan – through national capacity-building initiatives and policy dialogue on the presence of Central African refugees. The project also aimed to promote economic opportunities and resource-mobilization mechanisms to support the hosting, local integration and reintegration of refugees and returnees.

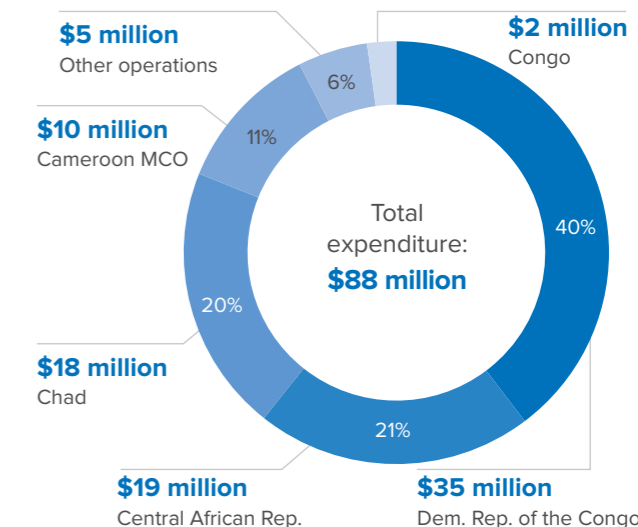
The EU-funded project focused on supporting the return and reintegration of 5,000 individuals repatriated from the DRC. Collaboration with the World Bank was further strengthened, enabling ongoing inclusion of 50,000 forcibly displaced people and host community members in the CAR’s national social safety net programme.

Use of flexible funding

Flexible funding enabled UNHCR to sustain protection monitoring and child protection activities in the CAR, strengthening incident reporting, safety and support for IDPs and returnees. Child protection services reached 12,300 at-risk children and caregivers, while training was provided to 318 local authorities and 125 community members. Nevertheless, severe funding constraints limited the scale of the response. With only 29% of the required funding received in 2025, UNHCR prioritized life-saving protection interventions, slowing progress towards economic inclusion and self-reliance.

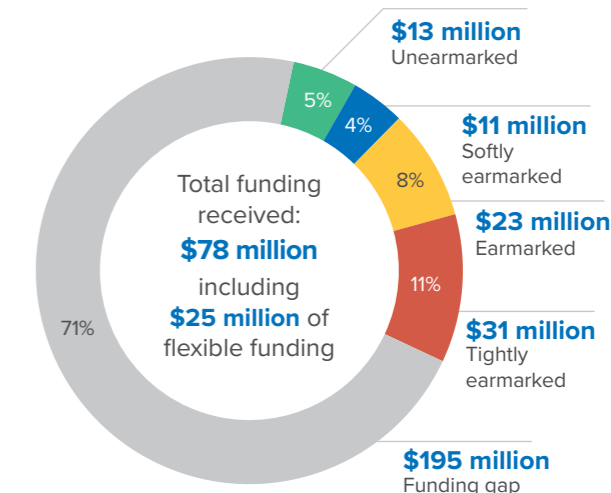
Financial overview

Expenditure by operation

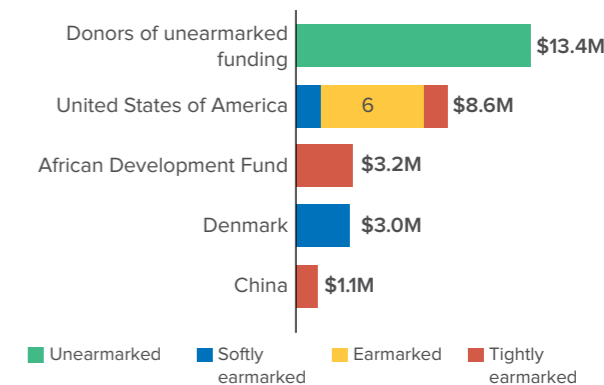


Funding received

In 2025, UNHCR required a total of \$273 million to address the CAR situation but received only 29% of that amount.



Top 5 donors



Voluntary contributions from all other donors, carry-over and other adjustments were \$48.7 million.

Sustaining returns through reintegration



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As refugee returns increased, UNHCR’s reintegration efforts empowered returnees to rebuild their lives. In Nana-Mambéré, partnerships with government and development actors improved basic services, infrastructure and livelihoods. Francine Govini, a mother of five who returned to Baoro after 11 years, now earns a living helping to construct shelters for vulnerable families. “Let’s support the project and build better futures for our children,” she says.