Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme

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Standing Committee
Ninety-nineth meeting

UNHCR programme in the United Nations proposed framework for 2027

Summary

This paper contains an advance copy of UNHCR's draft programme in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 2027 (contained in annex I).

The draft programme will be reviewed by relevant bodies responsible for the approval of UNHCR's programme, which forms part of the United Nations regular budget, including the United Nations Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. Following the outcomes of the deliberations in these bodies, the United Nations regular budget will be considered for adoption by the General Assembly in December 2026.

The Standing Committee is, therefore, asked to take note of the draft programme through the adoption of the decision contained in annex II.

Annex 1 [English only]

ADVANCE COPY

Extract

Eighty-first session
Items 137 and 138 of the preliminary list
Proposed programme budget for 2027

Programme planning

Proposed programme budget for 2027

Part VI
Human rights and humanitarian affairs

Section 25
International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees

Programme 21
International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees

Proposed programme plan for 2027 and programme performance in 2025

Overall orientation

Mandates and background

25.1 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for leading and coordinating international action for the protection of refugees and the search for solutions to their plight. Its mandate derives from relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions, including resolutions 319 A (IV), by which the Assembly established the Office, and 428 (V), which sets out its statute. In addition, the international legal basis for the protection of refugees finds its principal expression in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967. UNHCR also has responsibilities for stateless persons pursuant to paragraph 6 (A) (ii) of its statute and article I (A) (2) of the 1951 Convention with regard to refugees who are stateless, as well as to various Assembly resolutions in relation to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons of 1954 and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961. The mandate of UNHCR has been extended to other groups through various Assembly resolutions. UNHCR provides protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, working in cooperation with the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and in the context of the collaborative response of the United Nations system, as well as with the consent of the State concerned.

Programme of work

International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees

Objective

25.2 The objective, to which this programme contributes, is to ensure international protection for refugees and other persons of concern[1] and to achieve durable solutions to their plight, in cooperation with States and other organizations, without discrimination.

Strategy and external factors for 2027

25.3 To contribute to the objective, UNHCR will, in close cooperation with national and local authorities, partners in the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, persons of concern, the private sector, development partners, academia and other relevant stakeholders:

(a) Swiftly and effectively respond to humanitarian crises, including in conflict-affected areas, by providing protection, humanitarian and life-saving assistance, while ensuring preparedness measures to respond to new emergencies with agility;

(b) Advocate accession and adherence by States to relevant international and regional instruments, including the refugee and statelessness conventions;

(c) Promote and facilitate the admission, reception and treatment of refugees in accordance with internationally agreed standards and advocate for the prevention and reduction of statelessness;

[1] Other persons of concern include asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, stateless persons and internally displaced persons.

(d) Support implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees; follow up on the implementation of pledges from the Global Refugee Forums; advocate for more active international solidarity and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing to support communities and countries hosting refugees; and promote progress towards sustainable responses.

(e) Enhance the protection and assistance for internally displaced persons under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee coordination system, in line with relevant General Assembly resolutions;

(f) Contribute to the resilience of forcibly displaced persons and their host communities faced with the adverse effects of climate change and disasters, in consultation with national authorities and in cooperation with competent agencies.

25.4 By promoting comprehensive approaches, UNHCR will contribute to relevant goals contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that refugees and other persons of concern are not left behind in development processes (A/AC.96/76/5).

25.5 The above-mentioned work is expected to result in:

(a) Significant advances in the response to refugee situations through more predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing and through a multi-stakeholder approach, consistent with the Global Compact on Refugees;

(b) Strengthened national asylum systems that are compliant with international legal standards;

(c) The advancement of solutions for forcibly displaced people, including voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement, while reaffirming the importance of support to facilitate sustainable reintegration in countries of origin;

(d) Reinforced solutions for stateless people, resulting in previously stateless individuals acquiring nationality or having their nationality confirmed;

(e) Improved access to protection and assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers through registration.

25.6 With regard to the external factors, the overall plan for 2027 is based on the following planning assumptions:

(a) Security conditions shall allow UNHCR to carry out its programmes;

(b) Humanitarian access will be granted in most countries, enabling UNHCR to respond to urgent protection and assistance needs;

(c) States and the international community at large will remain committed to contributing to and supporting the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, including pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum;

(d) Asylum space and policies will not further restrict admissions in some countries;

(e) Voluntary funding from donors will match the budgeted needs to respond effectively and adequately to situations of forced displacement and statelessness.

25.7 With regard to cooperation with other entities at the global, regional, national and local levels, UNHCR will engage a wide range of partners in programme delivery. UNHCR will strengthen partnerships with local actors, regional organizations, organizations led by refugees and other persons of concern, development actors and international financial institutions to advance the inclusion of displaced populations in United Nations programmes and national humanitarian and development policies and plans. UNHCR will strengthen feedback and response mechanisms as a means of consulting displaced and stateless people on its programmes. The Office will continue to invest in private-sector partnerships to secure support for strategic and long-term responses. Efforts to address protection needs by empowering affected communities and fostering their resilience and self-reliance until durable solutions are found will be a priority.

25.8 With regard to inter-agency coordination and liaison, UNHCR will closely cooperate with resident and humanitarian coordinators to promote overarching comprehensive protection and solutions strategies. UNHCR will coordinate with other agencies by leveraging comparative advantages in support of nationally defined priorities and planning frameworks. This approach enhances complementarity and collective outcomes. The Office will remain engaged in United Nations coordination forums, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board. Building on its Institutional Plan on Solutions to Internal Displacement, UNHCR will continue engaging in situations of internal displacement.

25.9 UNHCR integrates a gender perspective in its operational activities, deliverables and results, as appropriate. UNHCR will remain fully committed to a non-discriminatory approach, ensuring its responses and interventions consider the needs, priorities, and capacities of affected communities. It will work to prevent, mitigate and respond to gender-based violence and violence against children, including sexual violence. The Office will also enhance collaboration with organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless persons, including those led by women.

25.10 In line with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, UNHCR will enhance participation of persons with disabilities and strengthen partnerships with organizations of persons with disabilities, and the Global Network of Refugees with Disabilities. UNHCR will promote non-discrimination and disability inclusion across its programmes and will advocate equal access for forcibly displaced persons with disabilities to social protection schemes.

Adjustments arising from the UN80 initiative

25.11 The proposed programme plan for 2027 contains no significant change arising from the UN80 initiative and reflects efforts of the programme to implement all mandates in a more efficient and effective manner.

25.12 UNHCR will be guided by any future decisions taken in the context of the UN80 initiative, in accordance with established procedures and with due regard to the central role of Member States in the reform process, including with respect to proposals on realigning responsibilities and reducing programmatic overlaps. UNHCR is working closely with other entities to clarify roles and responsibilities and establish clearer divisions of labour to enable greater efficiency, predictability and results at scale.

Evaluation activities

25.13 The following evaluations conducted by UNHCR and completed in 2025 have guided the proposed programme plan for 2027:

(a) Evaluation of gender-based violence prevention, risk mitigation and response;
(b) Evaluation of UNHCR's multi-country emergency response to the situation in Sudan;
(c) Evaluation of the Senegal multi-country office strategy;
(d) Country strategy evaluations in Brazil, Bulgaria, Republic of Korea and Somalia.

25.14 In response to the results of the evaluations referenced above, UNHCR will strengthen partnerships with local actors across operational contexts to more effectively prevent and respond to gender-based violence. The design of future emergency responses will be enhanced by capitalizing on cross-regional approaches, including for contingency planning, cross-border operations and regional communication plans. The country strategy and multi-country office strategy evaluations will inform UNHCR's strategies for 2027 in the respective regions.

25.15 The following evaluations to be conducted by UNHCR are planned for 2027:

(a) Thematic evaluation on economic inclusion and self-reliance of refugees in urban areas;
(b) Evaluation of UNHCR's policy on cash-based interventions;
(c) Evaluation of UNHCR's approach to localization;
(d) Country and multi-country office strategy evaluations.

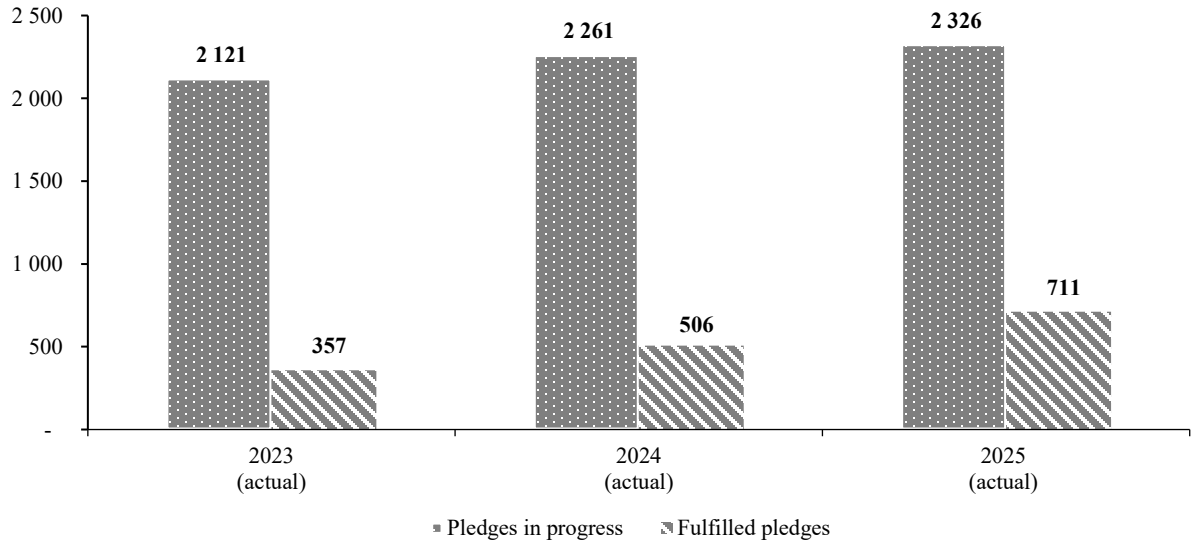
Programme performance in 2025

Global Refugee Forum pledges advance responsibility sharing and support for refugees and host communities

25.16 As a framework for predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing, the Global Compact on Refugees aims to transform how the world responds to refugee situations, benefitting both refugees and host communities. In December 2025, the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review assessed progress toward the Global Compacts' objectives, reviewed implementation and achievement of pledges, and identified areas for renewed attention and support. UNHCR plays a catalytical role to ensure the pledges directly benefit refugees, hosting states and countries of origin as well as the cities and communities that support them. Over 30 new policy and financial pledges were announced with significant commitments from States and the private sector. Together, these commitments have delivered measurable impact for refugees and communities that host them, with inclusive policies strengthening both individual self-reliance and national economies. These approaches have expanded access to decent work, increased incomes and public revenues, and improved access to essential services such as health and education. For example, by 2025, legal access to the labour market enabled approximately 33 million refugees 96 countries to pursue livelihoods and contribute to their host communities. At the community level, pledges also fostered social inclusion and well-being, with 336,000 refugees and host community members reached through sports and other community activities that promote connection, resilience, and shared opportunity.

25.17 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.1)

Figure 25.I
Performance measure: number of Global Refugee Forum pledges (cumulative)



Result 1: increased prevalence of national and local partners in refugee response plans globally

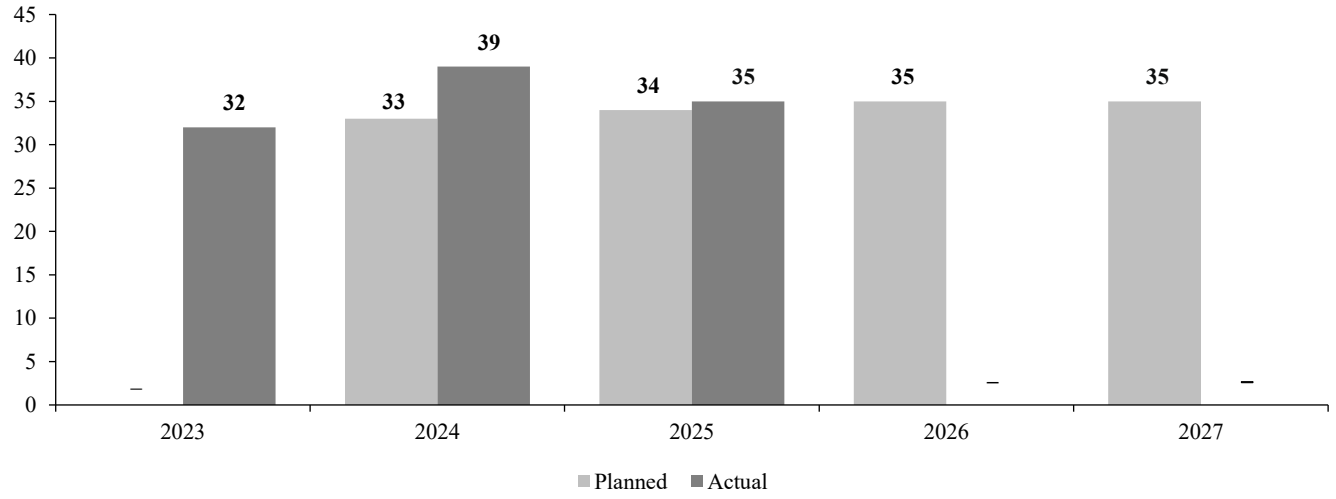
Programme performance in 2025 and target for 2027

25.18 The programme's work contributed to 35 per cent of local and national operational partners being involved in refugee response plans globally, which exceeded the planned target of 34 per cent.

25.19 Progress towards the objective and the target for 2027 are presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.II).

Figure 25.II

Performance measure: percentage of local and national operational partners in refugee response plans globally (as a proportion of all partners)



Result 2: strengthened protection and access to services for refugees and asylum-seekers

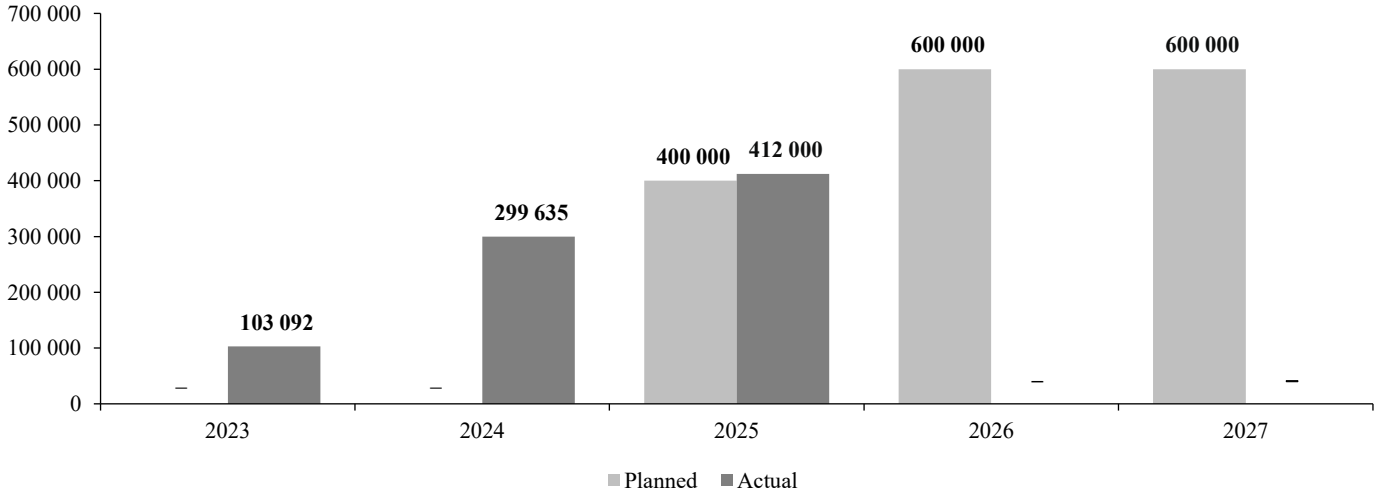
Programme performance in 2025 and target for 2027

25.20 The programme's work contributed to 412,000 persons of concern who have created digital accounts through the Digital Gateway, which exceeded the planned target of 400,000.

25.21 Progress towards the objective and the target for 2027 are presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.III).

Figure 25.III

Performance measure: number of persons of concern who have created digital accounts through the Digital Gateway (cumulative)



Result 3: Increased adherence to international conventions on statelessness
Proposed programme plan for 2027

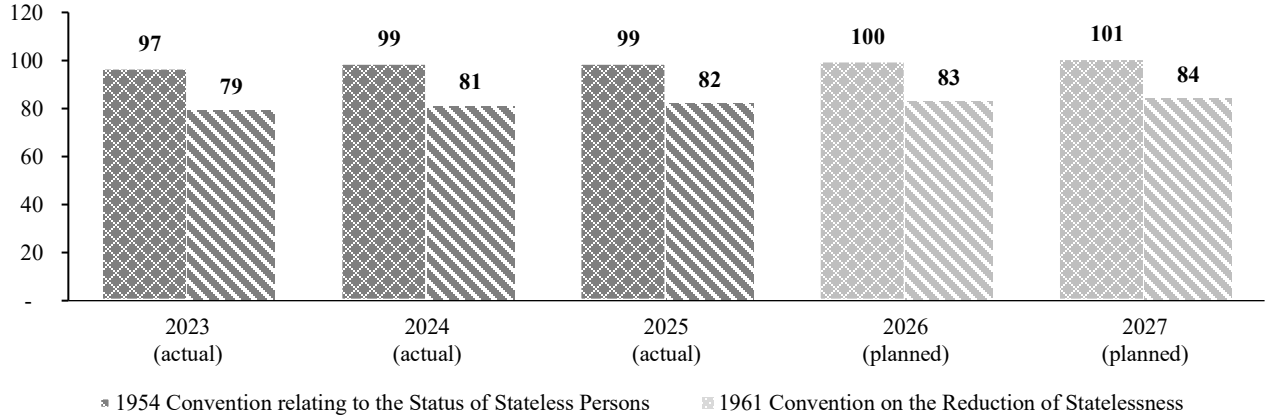
25.22 Statelessness remains a critical global issue, as the absence of nationality and legal identity continues to expose individuals to long-term exclusion and vulnerability. UNHCR estimates that about 4.4 million people worldwide are stateless or of undetermined nationality, with millions more unrecorded in official data. In line with UNHCR's mandate and guided by the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, UNHCR supports Governments to identify and protect stateless persons and to prevent and resolve statelessness.

Lessons learned and planned change

25.23 The lesson for UNHCR was that progress in addressing statelessness is most significant where legal and policy reforms are accompanied by firm government support and sustained national engagement. While legislative reforms have advanced in several contexts, continued technical support is required for effective implementation. In applying the lesson, UNHCR will prioritize advocacy for solutions and accession to the conventions, and will strengthen national capacities and share best practices to support the implementation of international legal standards. Sustained engagement at the national level will be reinforced through multi-stakeholder collaboration under the Global Alliance to End Statelessness.

25.24 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (see figure 25.IV)

Figure 25.IV
Performance measure: number of States that are signatories to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (cumulative)



Legislative mandates

25.25 The list below, which was reviewed in the preparation of the proposed programme budget, provides all mandates entrusted to the Office.

General Assembly resolutions

319 A (IV)	Refugees and stateless persons
428 (V)	Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
1166 (XII)	International assistance to refugees within the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
31/36	Question of the establishment, in accordance with the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, of a body to

	which persons claiming the benefit of the Convention may apply
50/152; 53/125; 80/187	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
58/153	Implementing actions proposed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to strengthen the capacity of his Office to carry out its mandate

70/1	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
71/1	New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants
80/188	Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa
80/211	Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons

Conventions and conference declarations

Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1951, and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1967

Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954

Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961

Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969

Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, 1984

Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989

San José Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons, 1994

African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, 2009

Deliverables

25.26 Table 25.2 lists all deliverables of UNHCR.

Table 25.2
Deliverables for the period 2025–2027, by category and subcategory

Category and subcategory	*2025 planned*	*2025 actual*	*2026 planned*	*2027 planned*
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	**34**	**44**	**41**	**34**
1. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the General Assembly	1	1	1	1
2. Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa	1	-	1	1
3. Report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the General Assembly	1	1	1	1
4. Annual note on international protection to the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner	1	1	1	1
5. Documents related to oversight issues, including UNHCR inspection and evaluation activities, submitted to the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner	7	7	7	6
6. Reports of the Standing Committee to the Executive Committee	3	3	3	3
7. Report to the General Assembly on the annual programme budget of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	1	1	1	1
8. Documents and conference room papers for the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee	19	30	26	20
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	**30**	**31**	**30**	**30**
Meetings of:				
9. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions	2	2	2	2
10. The Fifth Committee	1	1	1	1
11. The Committee for Programme and Coordination	1	1	1	1
12. The Executive Committee and Standing Committee	25	26	25	25

Category and subcategory	*2025 planned*	*2025 actual*	*2026 planned*	*2027 planned*
13. The Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	1	1	1	1
Documentation services for meetings (thousands of words)	**200**	**200**	**200**	**200**
14. Executive Committee and Standing Committee documents	200	200	200	200
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	**9**	**8**	**11**	**12**
15. On attaining a favourable protection environment, realizing rights in safe environments, empowering communities and securing solutions such as voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement	9	8	11	12
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	**60**	**51**	**60**	**51**
16. Training courses for government and implementing partners on emergency management, refugee law, protection and operations management	45	38	45	38
17. Seminars on programme areas for UNHCR implementing partners and government officials, including on the Global Compact on Refugees	15	13	15	13
Publications (number of publications)	**22**	**19**	**32**	**22**
18. Midyear and year-end trends of global forced displacement (formerly the *Statistical Yearbook*)	2	2	2	2
19. Publications on a range of protection-related themes	20	17	30	20
Fact-finding, monitoring and investigation missions (number of missions)	**44**	**53**	**60**	**50**
20. Monitoring missions on the implementation of the programme	40	48	40	35
21. Investigations related to cases accepted by the Inspector General's Office	4	5	20	15
Humanitarian assistance missions (number of missions)	**130**	**127**	**160**	**120**
22. Humanitarian assistance missions undertaken by the UNHCR senior executive team	130	127	160	120

C. Substantive deliverables

Consultation, advice and advocacy: advice on refugee protection and solutions, and on the rights of refugees, other forcibly displaced persons and stateless persons under international, regional and national law, to approximately 109 countries; support to the legislative processes of 64 countries; dialogue and consultations with partners.

Direct service delivery: protection services for approximately 13 million people; individual registration for some 15 million refugees and asylum-seekers; the provision of shelter-related relief items for at least 600,000 people; legal aid to facilitate acquiring of nationality or having it confirmed; the delivery of cash-assistance for basic needs for 4 million people.

D. Communication deliverables

Outreach programmes, special events and information materials: World Refugee Day; Global Trends Report; communications on thematic priorities; communications on emergencies, Global Refugee Fora (2025 and 2027), 75th anniversary of the 1951 Convention.

External and media relations: media and communications partnerships and media coverage on thematic areas and key emergencies; awareness-raising by almost 100 Goodwill Ambassadors, high-profile supporters and new influencers.

Digital platforms and multimedia content: stories that are co-led or co-produced with forcibly displaced and stateless people; UNHCR websites and UNHCR social media platforms.

Annex II

Draft decision on the UNHCR draft programme in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 2027

The Standing Committee,

Takes note of *part VI, section 25, programme 21: International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees* of the United Nations proposed programme budget for 2027.