



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

DONOR IMPACT REPORT 2024

Looking back at what our valued supporters
helped make possible in 2024



Contents

FOREWORD - Deputy High Commissioner Kelly T. Clements	3
FUNDING AND IMPACT FIGURES	4
UNHCR'S TEAM AND EMERGENCY DEPLOYMENTS	6
MONTH BY MONTH	8
GLOBAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS	12
EMERGENCIES OVERVIEW STAFF INTERVIEW	18
SUDAN EMERGENCY – DEEP DIVE	20
LEBANON EMERGENCY – DEEP DIVE	31
WEATHER-RELATED EMERGENCIES	40
GLOBAL REACH	44

FRONT COVER: UNHCR staff member with Afaf, an internally displaced woman (IDP), inside her tent at an IDP gathering site near Kassala, Sudan.
© UNHCR/Aymen Alfadil

Contact us:
UNHCR Donor Content Hub
Global Communications Service
UN City, Copenhagen
donorcontent@unhcr.org

Published: April 2025



Foreword

Deputy High Commissioner Kelly T. Clements is welcomed by UNHCR staff at the Melkadida airstrip in Ethiopia

Humanitarian crises multiplied and worsened in 2024. The number of families forced to flee increased yet again, reaching another record high. Conflict and violence continued to devastate communities, while extreme weather – from floods to droughts, well above historic norms – swept away homes, brought diseases, destroyed crops and livelihoods, straining an already fragile system.

It would be easy to read this annual report as a diary of despair. But in every crisis, there was also resolve and hope on the part of those same families. We too looked for hope as we rushed aid into these hot spots, alongside partners, to deliver lifesaving support where it was needed most. We were there in over 130 countries around the world and more than 550 locations to deliver, a reflection of our commitment to those with whom we work. And we were able to do so thanks to your generosity.

Thanks to your funding, we were able to prepare for humanitarian emergencies and respond quickly when crises hit, saving lives, safeguarding rights, and protecting the most vulnerable. If you are looking for evidence that your contributions have a real, lasting and transformative impact, you will find it in these pages.

We know these are difficult times for the world and the humanitarian and development sectors have been hard hit as resources are increasingly limited. While some governments remain steadfast in their support; others are cutting their aid budgets. The human cost of these funding shortfalls is felt worldwide, and it is already severe.

The consequences of doing less with less are powerfully captured in this report by my colleague Simon Girmaw, an emergency officer working in east Africa. There, millions have been forced to flee their homes by a deadly combination of war, extremist violence and natural disasters. As he reminds us, without adequate funding, we cannot bring life-saving aid to desperate people – shelter, health care, food and clean water, medical help and counselling to survivors of violence, including sexual violence, and much more.

This is why the role of our donors – from governments to businesses, foundations, philanthropies and individuals – is so important. I am grateful to those who stand with us, despite competing priorities. Your trust humbles us, and it compels us to carry out our important mandate, wherever we are needed.

But above all, I am awed by the courage and perseverance, and indeed hope, of those who have been forced to flee their homes. People who rebuild their lives with dignity and tenacity, creating opportunities against the odds, finding work or opening businesses, no matter how small, to ensure food is on the table and their kids go to school. And I am inspired by the compassion and generosity of the communities hosting them, sharing what little they have with newcomers, despite their modest means.

Because of your support, our work will continue, and people fleeing danger will find safety and a chance to recover. We will never give up, and we hope you will remain by our side as we continue to protect, aid, and find solutions for those most in need. Thank you most sincerely.

Kelly T. Clements
Deputy High Commissioner

© UNHCR/Tiksa Negeri

FUNDING AND IMPACT FIGURES

In 2024 UNHCR staff responded to or managed 43 emergency declarations, including 17 that continued from 2023.

This vital work would not have been possible without the exceptional support from our donors.

In 2024, \$630 million of UNHCR's funding came from the private sector. Of this funding, 57% was contributed by individual donors, while 43% came from corporations, foundations and philanthropists.

Governments continue to provide the bulk of UNHCR's funding, accounting for 84% of the total budget of the organisation.

IMPORTANCE OF UNEARMARKED FUNDING

Given the nature of UNHCR's life-saving work, it is important for our workforce and supply chain to remain prepared to respond whenever and wherever crisis hits. This is why unearmarked funding is of so much value. This type of funding allows UNHCR to:

- Respond swiftly to emerging crises and allocate resources based on real-time needs, rather than waiting for dedicated funds to arrive.
- Respond to crises over a sustained period, ensuring no one is left behind in underfunded regional crises and forgotten emergencies
- Stay efficient and adaptable as it provides the flexibility needed to respond to changing needs and advance sustainable, innovative approaches.

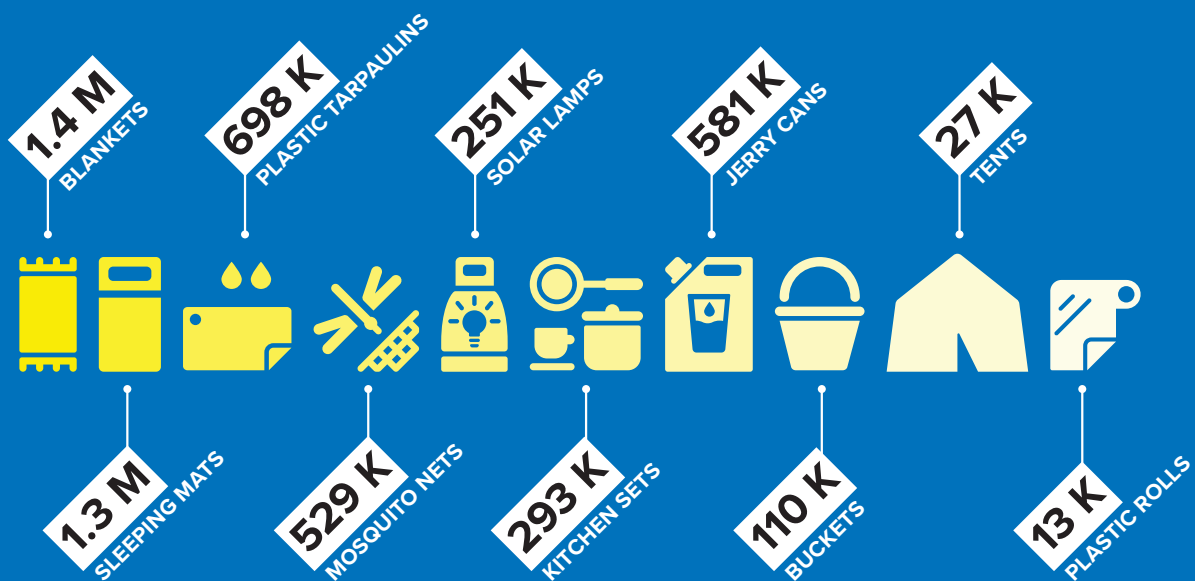
CORE RELIEF ITEMS

When conflict erupts, when disasters force families from their homes, when people flee with nothing but a few personal items - UNHCR is there.

In the critical first hours of an emergency, rapid response can make all the difference. That's why we invest in preparedness. Thanks to the generosity of supporters, UNHCR has a network of emergency stockpiles in seven key hubs spread out across the world: Accra, Amman, Copenhagen, Douala, Dubai,

Nairobi and Panama City. These warehouses allow us to respond swiftly, ensuring that essential relief reaches families as soon as possible.

By air, land, and sea, our teams worked around the clock in 2024 to deliver life-saving assistance. More than 7.4 million relief items were dispatched—helping up to 16.7 million displaced people rebuild and recover. These critical supplies included:



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

When families are forced to flee, they leave behind not just their homes and entire way of life but also any sense of financial stability—their jobs, possessions, life savings, even the security of knowing where their next meal will come from. Rebuilding a life often comes with impossible choices—putting food on the table versus buying medicine; paying the rent versus keeping their children warm through winter...

UNHCR's financial support provides a lifeline, offering dignity and flexibility in times of crisis. Instead of a fixed solution, it empowers refugees and other displaced people to pay for essentials and prioritize their family's needs.

In an unpredictable world, this support means they can navigate challenges with more security and control over their future.

UNHCR's Team and Emergency Deployments

At the heart of every humanitarian mission are the people who make it happen. More than 90 % of UNHCR's workforce is in field locations, and our teams work tirelessly to protect and support those forced to flee, bringing expertise, compassion and an unwavering commitment to those in need.

From emergency coordinators and protection officers to medical staff, engineers and logistics experts, our teams step in when crisis strikes. Whether in conflict zones, disaster-hit regions, or refugee camps facing sudden surges, they work to restore safety, dignity and hope.

Emergency response is at the core of what we do. When a crisis escalates, our teams are prepared to deploy anywhere in the world, often

within hours, to ensure urgent aid gets to where it is most needed.

This work is only possible because of you. Your generosity fuels every deployment, every life-saving intervention, and every effort to bring stability in the face of chaos. Thanks to your support UNHCR remains ready to act—whenever and wherever we are needed.



18,786
people in UNHCR's total workforce



163
nationalities within the total workforce



26,8%
of team who serve within the countries where they're from



143
countries in which we're located



90%
of UNHCR staff work in the field



\$45.8 million

Value of emergency supplies delivered from global stockpiles



By Air

267 Metric tons



By Road

4,890 Metric tons



By Sea

4,534 Metric tons



21

Air shipments and emergency airlifts



\$293.9 million

Value of centrally procured goods and services



8.7 million

Number of visits to access information from the [UNHCR Help website](#), mostly during emergencies



240

Staff and standby partner roster members trained in emergency response



255

Emergency deployments of internal and standby partners

Hajar Al-Haj, a refugee child, was pictured after receiving her new blanket after UNHCR distributed new winter blankets to some families in the camp in Zaatari camp in Jordan.



MONTH BY MONTH

January

As the year begins, fighting in Myanmar intensifies, worsening an already dire humanitarian crisis. Ongoing clashes that escalated in October 2021 force more than a million people to flee, bringing the total number of internally displaced to 3.5 million. Thousands more cross the border to neighbouring countries. UNHCR provides aid in Myanmar to 625,000 people, including essential supplies for 360,000 and shelter support for 73,500. In Indonesia, UNHCR assists Rohingya refugees in East Aceh and North Sumatra, advocating for safe disembarkation and providing food, relief and sanitation services while also countering misinformation to promote community understanding.

February

Violent clashes erupt in North Kivu province forcing over 300,000 people to flee to Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Another 85,000 seek refuge in Minova, overwhelming displacement sites. By July, the conflict has uprooted 1.3 million more. In all, 8 million Congolese are uprooted—seven million inside the DRC and over 1.1 million in neighbouring countries. Many face horrendous conditions, with little access to shelter, sanitation or employment. UNHCR teams provide shelter for 95,000 people and relief items for 45,000 others. More than 16,800 women and girls receive kits containing essential hygiene items. Over 3,000 families get financial support for their most urgent needs, while 34,700 women and girls are supported with medical and mental health services after suffering sexual violence.

March

Heavy rains in Afghanistan cause severe flooding for months. By June over 300 people lost their lives, and more than 10,500 homes have been damaged or destroyed. Baghlan is hit the hardest, while Badakhshan and Takhar also face heavy losses. Flooding isolates entire districts, cutting off tens of thousands. Livelihoods are devastated as farmland and livestock are lost, while schools, health facilities and water networks suffer serious damage. In July, more storms strike central and eastern regions, affecting thousands in Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar. UNHCR teams are already on the ground, providing emergency aid, shelter and relief items to families. As winter approaches, they remain in place helping communities recover and rebuild with climate-resilient shelters, financial support and livelihood programmes.



April

In late April, unprecedented rainfall devastates Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, affecting 96 % of the state. Entire neighbourhoods are inundated, and critical infrastructure, including roads, communications networks and water systems, suffers extensive damage. Nearly 2.4 million people are affected, with 183 lives lost. At the peak of the crisis, over 600,000 residents have been forced from their homes and over 80,000 seek shelter in state-managed accommodation centres. UNHCR delivers 17 tonnes of relief items, including sleeping mats, blankets, hygiene kits, solar lamps, kitchen sets, jerry cans and mosquito nets. 308 Relief Housing Units are provided for over 1,800 displaced people. Financial assistance reaches more than 1,200 families, enabling them to address specific critical needs like food and water, household goods and health care.

May

Heavy rains and flooding triggered by El Niño devastate East Africa and the Great Lakes region, affecting over 3.7 million people, including refugees and displaced communities in Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. South Sudan is the worst hit, with 1.3 million people affected and 327,000 pushed out of their homes by the floods. UNHCR and partners respond with emergency aid, shelter and financial support. In Sudan, clean water and health services reach hundreds of thousands, while in Somalia, thousands receive emergency shelter kits. Infrastructure projects help to mitigate the impact of future flooding.

June

As the monsoon begins, UNHCR provides urgent support in Bangladesh, supplying shelter materials and rebuilding infrastructure such as roads and bridges. To mitigate the potential impact of storms, UNHCR-trained refugee volunteers help to evacuate areas prone to landslides and flooding. To prevent waterborne diseases, teams expand awareness campaigns, distribute mosquito nets and stock up on medicines at clinics in the 16 refugee camps of Cox's Bazar. Later in August, catastrophic floods in Bangladesh affect millions of people in 11 districts across the country, including those in Cox's Bazar where nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees live alongside their host communities.

Dougi refugee settlement in Chad



July

In July, heavy rains and hailstorms hit Sa'ada, Yemen, followed by catastrophic flooding in August that devastates Al Mahweet as three dams burst, destroying entire communities. Across the country, over 63,000 households are affected since April, with severe damage in displacement sites in 19 governorates. Floods sweep away homes and take people's livelihoods with them, exacerbating what is an already dire humanitarian situation in Yemen. With 18.2 million people in need of aid, UNHCR provides survival funds, emergency shelter and essential relief. As floods continue through summer, efforts remain focused on supporting recovery and resilience for displaced and host communities, including the installation of drainage channels and building resilient shelters.

August

Heavy rainfall and flooding hits 13 of Sudan's 18 states, while disease outbreaks, especially cholera, worsen among refugees and host communities in Chad and South Sudan. UNHCR provides safe water to 668,000 people in Sudan and delivers urgent humanitarian aid, expanding camps and offering emergency shelter both inside the country and in the region. UNCHR also works with partners to combat the worst food insecurity in Sudan's history, with 26 million people suffering from acute hunger; in August, famine conditions are confirmed. Violence against ethnic groups, which erupted in April 2023, continues. By the year's end, over 12.3 million people have been forced to flee their homes. UNHCR continues to deliver life-saving aid and respond to growing humanitarian needs.

September

On 23 September, Israel intensifies airstrikes triggering the deadliest attacks on Lebanon in decades. After a month of hostilities over 1.2 million have been displaced inside the country. Another 450,000 - including Syrian refugees and Lebanese nationals - flee into Syria, where resources are already strained. A ceasefire begins in November, but humanitarian needs remain critical, with 15,000 buildings severely damaged and 40 villages in the south entirely wiped out. UNHCR teams provide financial assistance to 453,000 people and essential supplies to 258,000. Health support includes ambulances, trauma kits and medical supplies for 100,000 people. Inside Syria, 250,000 people receive emergency relief, including winter kits and food aid. UNHCR continues supporting displaced communities to recover from the violence.

October

More than 4.9 million people are affected as torrential rains and severe flooding devastate West and Central Africa. Chad, Niger, Cameroon, Mali and Nigeria are among the hardest hit. An estimated 330,000 forcibly displaced people are affected. By year-end, the number of those forced to flee because of conflict and natural disasters across the region reaches 14 million—double the 2019 figure. UNHCR delivers emergency aid to nearly 454,000 people, financial support to 136,000, and shelter support. Water infrastructure is rehabilitated and essential documents, crucial for accessing rights and services, are replaced. Even though the conditions remain challenging, UNHCR continues working to strengthen protection and recovery efforts.

November

As the full-scale war in Ukraine reaches its 1,000th day, the relentless hostilities force more people to evacuate to safer regions or flee to neighbouring countries. By now, millions have been uprooted, seeking refuge either somewhere else within Ukraine or across Europe and beyond. Despite the often dangerous conditions, UNHCR and partners deliver protection services, mental health support and legal assistance to those affected. Financial support helps hundreds of thousands cover urgent needs like heating, food and medical care. Preparing for a harsh winter, UNHCR teams provide emergency shelter, blankets, winter clothing and other support to displaced communities across the country, particularly those close to the front lines.

December

The Syrian government collapses following an unexpected offensive by armed groups. The fighting displaces 1.1 million people. One in five have been forced to flee more than once. Before the year is out, 486,000 internally displaced Syrians go back home, mostly to Hama and Aleppo, while 198,000 more return from abroad. After nearly 14 years of conflict, over 90 % of Syrians live in poverty. More than 13 million remain displaced, including five million refugees. UNHCR resumes its key programmes, monitors the border and brings in emergency aid while planning early recovery efforts, including shelter repairs and livelihoods support.

Winter in Zaatari camp, Jordan

Ahmed and Hammam, who lives in Za'atari camp in Jordan with his family wraps a blanket around him following a UNHCR distribution of winter core relief items.

CAMPAIGNS

Global fundraising campaigns raised over \$65 million in 2024

Income from UNHCR's fundraising campaigns reached 74 % of our total digital income in 2024. These campaigns are essential and business-critical, as they are planned for specific dates and not reactive. In addition, the money raised from individuals for these campaigns is unearmarked, providing UNHCR with essential flexible funds.

The 2023-24 Winter campaign, which featured the extreme challenges faced by families in Afghanistan, Jordan, Moldova, Syria, Türkiye and Ukraine, raised \$28 million in six months.

In 2024, UNHCR supporters also contributed \$10.6 million to Aiming Higher, our tertiary education campaign, exceeding our targets. This opened the doors for 799 young refugee scholars to a brighter future through education.

The Ramadan campaign provided Zakat contributions exceeding \$14 million, reaching more than 474,000 eligible refugees and IDPs across 22 countries. Meanwhile, Sadaqah contributions surpassed \$7.8 million, benefiting over 390,000 people in 16 countries.

In addition, UNHCR ran two appeals focused on food insecurity and extreme weather events, with income still being finalized.



Winter Campaign

Olga and her three children fled their home in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, travelling by bus to Moldova, where they now rent a flat. Olga works shifts at a carpet factory.

“In winter we’re worried about utility bills being very high, and worried about having to dress the children, get them shoes, for them to go to school,” she said. “It’s cold, and honestly, I simply don’t have enough money.”

The family received crucial funds to support them when they first arrived.

“It was a great help... The children were well-provided for; they had enough clothes and food, and we didn’t lack anything. It was sufficient, especially since I also have income from my job.”

Last November, Olga received a winter relief kit for each family member, and a family hygiene kit and solar lamp from UNHCR.

In Moldova last winter, 17,800 people received blankets, warm clothing, hygiene kits and cooking utensils to help them endure the cold months. In Syria, 57,700 people benefited from shelter support. Winter survival funds helped 221,738 people in Afghanistan and 224,240 people in Ukraine. And more regular programmes were also funded thanks to the Winter campaign.

Aiming Higher

When the Aiming Higher campaign was launched in late 2020, the goal was to support 1,800 young, brilliant students with full scholarships to complete their higher education.

Four years later, 2,745 students have received full DAFI scholarships thanks to the support of donors who have contributed \$35.1 million to the campaign. The DAFI scholarship programme offers refugees and returnee students the possibility to earn an undergraduate degree in their country of asylum or home country.

One of them is Omar Maliyanguvu, a Congolese refugee who fled when he was just 8 years old, and who after several journeys was granted refugee status in Burundi. He was determined that education would be his path to independence and prosperity. “Ever since I was a child, I had always been drawn to the field of human rights, so I chose law,” he said.

It took repeated setbacks but eventually Omar was granted a scholarship to pursue studies in his chosen field.

“It was not easy. I had two children at the time and I also had to take care of my two brothers. But I knew it was the right decision for everyone in the long run.”

Graduating in 2017 with some of the highest marks in his year, Omar returned to his refugee camp. “Six months later, a position opened as DAFI Project Coordinator,” he said. “More than 40 people were shortlisted, including myself. After two rounds, I was finally offered the job.”

“As a refugee, I am well-placed to help DAFI fellows. I understand what they are going through. I really enjoy the programme and it's an honour for me to help students. I am close to them; they can confide in me.”

Omar Maliyanguvu originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo now a refugee in Burundi. DAFI alumnus and now country coordinator



Ramadan: A Month of Giving, A Lifeline for Refugees

Ramadan is a time of compassion and generosity. But for millions of people who have been forced from their homes, it is also a time of struggle.

Since 2017, UNHCR's Ramadan Campaign and Refugee Zakat Fund has played a crucial role in mobilizing global solidarity, raising vital funds through Zakat and Sadaqah to provide life-saving support to those in greatest need.

Through the Refugee Zakat Fund, UNHCR has delivered assistance to over 8.9 million people in 31 countries, ensuring that vulnerable families have access to food, shelter and financial support to meet their essential requirements.

For more information and to access the full 2024 Islamic Philanthropy Annual Report, please visit:

<https://zakat.unhcr.org/annualreport/annual-2024/>.

Nural Fatihah, 6-year-old Rohingya refugee live in Malaysia with her family.

2024 Food Insecurity and Climate appeals

In 2024, the Food Insecurity Appeal raised funds allowing UNHCR to provide financial assistance to refugees and displaced people, helping them to feed their families during food shortages.

Around 95% of UNHCR's financial support is unrestricted, meaning that people can choose how to spend it according to what is most urgent. In 2024, food was consistently rated among the top two expenditures of people receiving such support.

The Climate Appeal raised funds to help refugees prepare for imminent emergencies and minimize the impact of extreme weather.

Donations allowed UNHCR to be present during these emergencies, providing immediate aid and remaining on the ground after the immediate crisis had receded in order to implement sustainable, durable solutions. We helped people recover by providing clean fuel for cooking, distributing canoes for fishing and developing sustainable energy systems.

Nkurikiyimana Emmanuel, 42, a Rwandan refugee and beneficiary of Msochi irrigation scheme works in his Cabbage and Tomato farm



© UNHCR/Tiksa Negeri

UNHCR staff wait to receive sudanese refugees crossing into Chad.

© UNHCR/Nicola Filippa Rosso

STAFF PROFILE

Simon Girmaw

Emergency Officer, Nairobi, Kenya



What is your role at UNHCR?

As an emergency officer, I have different layers of responsibility. There are the early warnings and alerts, which need to be assessed and acted upon. Then comes preparedness, especially for country operations deemed to be at high risk of an emergency. Finally, there is the response phase when we face an imminent or sudden emergency, and we must act swiftly in tandem with country operations.

I feel that our work is unique and humbling because we're truly in deep-field areas, mobilizing government authorities, partners and local communities to respond collectively. Seeing this mobilization and witnessing the positive impact of our work is very rewarding.

What role does UNHCR play during displacement emergencies?

UNHCR has a crucial role. We are operational in some 136 countries, often present in very remote areas, meaning that we really are "on the ground". During emergencies, response is a collective effort, and a common understanding

of the strategy is very important. So UNHCR's refugee coordination model is extremely important. It's not only about our [protection] mandate or our specific responsibilities, because we also act as a catalyst to ensure that those who need to be at the table when it comes to responding to emergencies, are there.

I would add that host communities play a significant role – it's not just about UNHCR, UN agencies and partners. Advocacy and resource mobilization efforts are also critical and need to kick in parallel when we are responding to an emergency, because most operations might not have the capacity to respond.

What life-saving support does UNHCR provide during an emergency?

Life-saving assistance consists of the critical activities that we immediately need to put in place. If we don't, there are risks and costs associated with it – and that cost can be human lives.

Our work begins with protection, making sure that people who are fleeing have safe passage into another country and have access to asylum. This protection work is the first thing that comes

to mind when you say “life-saving”. Once this is provided, the other life-saving activities we are looking at are health and nutrition, because in most circumstances people have travelled long distances without anything. So usually, their health and nutrition are really at risk. Making sure we integrate this support is critical.

And then there are our supplies. When you look at most emergencies, people fleeing can find themselves without any shelter, even communal shelter. So shelter, non-food items like plastic sheets, jerry cans, blankets, kitchen sets are urgently needed when new arrivals reach emergency sites.

If we don’t provide these sorts of items, something as simple as a jerry can, then you can find children drinking water from a pothole. And that could lead to a severe health crisis and sometimes to death. So the services that we deliver really do mitigate the risks that vulnerable people face.

How does UNHCR also help people rebuild their lives?

With the right support, refugees can rebuild their lives and contribute to their new communities. We see this all the time, and such moments remind us why our work is so important.

The immediate response is, of course, life-saving. But UNHCR’s work is not restricted to humanitarian intervention. How do we help communities to become resilient? How do we get areas with large numbers of refugees integrated within the development programme of a particular country? We also have to think about long-term engagement with governments to find long-lasting solutions, so that we create something sustainable and durable.

What are some of the trends you saw in 2024 in terms of UNCHR’s emergency response?

One emerging trend we observed in 2024 is what I call the layering of risks. In the past, an emergency often stemmed from a single cause, such as conflict or a natural disaster. Now, multiple crises are overlapping. We must consider not just how many people are crossing a border in search of safety, but also where they can settle. Are those areas prone to flooding? Will there be supply chain issues?

Why is funding so critical for UNCHR’s emergency response?

Put simply, we cannot do our work without funding. If it is not there, the consequences will be severe. We will have to decide which programmes to cut. This will affect entire communities.

Moreover, in an emergency, if funding is not available, people often have to live in unsafe conditions—in the open, under trees—for extended periods. This has direct consequences for their health and safety. Without nutrition services, malnourished children cannot receive treatment. Without proper protection services, vulnerable groups—such as survivors of sexual violence or people living with disabilities—do not get the support they need.

Another consequence is that if people who have been uprooted don’t find the help they need, they are likely to move on in search of it. They are human beings, their instinct is to protect their children and other family members. Not only is such onward movement inherently dangerous, but it also means that other countries and communities will be put under pressure.

The best way to prevent these things is to ensure that essential assistance and services are in place.

DEEP DIVE

SUDAN EMERGENCY

The overall situation and UNHCR's response

In April 2024, the war in Sudan entered its second year. It has become the world's largest displacement crisis, with over **12.3 million people forced to flee** inside and outside the country. Those fleeing the conflict continued to arrive in the **Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan**.

Arrivals also increased in countries that had not previously received large numbers of Sudanese refugees. **Libya** saw significant numbers of refugees from Sudan; others crossed multiple borders to reach **Uganda**; while South Sudanese refugees who had fled to Sudan continued to return home despite instability in their home country.



Health conditions for displaced Sudanese deteriorated throughout the year, with cholera, malaria and measles spreading rapidly in overcrowded settlements. In mid-2024, a **cholera outbreak** was first reported in Sudan, quickly spreading into South Sudan and Chad, where overcrowded camps, limited sanitation and contaminated water caused the disease to spread further.

Throughout the year, UNHCR teams scaled up efforts to prevent further outbreaks, strengthen health care and provide food assistance.

Inside Sudan

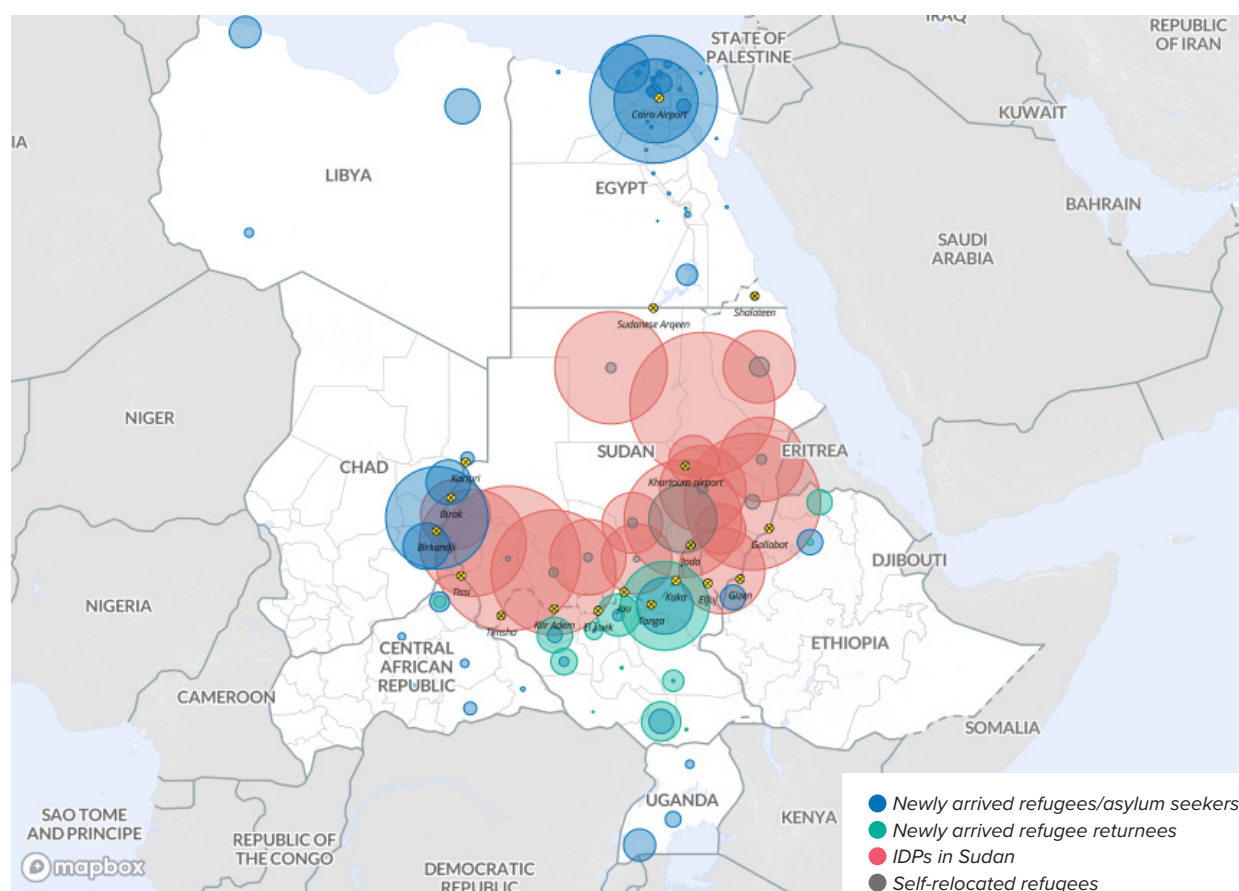
The conflict in Sudan escalated throughout 2024, particularly in Khartoum, Al Jazirah, Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile states. The use of heavy weaponry, including artillery and aerial bombardment, compelled millions to run for their lives.

From October, fighting forced more than 340,000 people to flee Al Jazirah state. In December, hundreds of thousands more sought refuge in South Sudan as violence escalated across Blue Nile, White Nile and Sennar states.

Sudan also faced the worst levels of food insecurity in its history, with many of those forced to flee having no access to food, water or medical care. Half the population—26 million people—

experienced severe hunger, while in August famine conditions were officially confirmed in parts of the country. The country was further devastated by heavy rain and flooding, which also affected thousands of refugees and host communities in Chad and South Sudan.

Despite the immense challenges, UNHCR teams worked around the clock to provide families with shelter, relief items and survival funds. Thanks to your support, 668,000 people were able to drink clean water, crucial to preventing the spread of disease in overcrowded camps.





UNHCR staff allocates new shelter to Sudanese refugees

Central African Republic (CAR)

More than 36,000 Sudanese have crossed into the Central African Republic since the start of the conflict in April 2023, over 10,000 of them in 2024, as well as 6,100 Central African returnees. By the end of last year, 17,645 refugees lived in the Korsi site in Birao, with the rest dispersed throughout villages in hard-to-reach locations in Vakaga, Bamingui-Bangoran, Haute-Kotto, Ouaka, Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou prefectures and in need of assistance and protection. UNHCR provided emergency relief and worked to relocate the most vulnerable to safer areas.

The situation remained volatile at the close of 2024, with additional strains on the already fragile humanitarian response. UNHCR constructed 858 emergency shelters, a health centre, 231 latrines, 144 emergency showers and two boreholes, providing 13 litres of clean, drinkable water per person daily. Additionally, two child-friendly spaces were created in Korsi, benefiting 569 girls and 582 boys.

Chad

Chad has long been a place of refuge for Sudanese families fleeing violence, but in 2024 another 238,000 people made the journey over the border, bringing the total to over 723,000 since the start of the conflict. Most arrived with nothing, relying entirely on humanitarian aid.

Thanks to the support of UNHCR's donors, 289,000 refugees were relocated to seven new camps and ten existing expanded sites, and 85,000 were relocated to new transitional shelters. But with resources stretched thin, overcrowded camps and overwhelmed health care facilities remain major concerns. More than 167,000 refugee children were treated for acute or severe malnutrition.

With UNHCR support, 138,000 Sudanese refugee children were enrolled in schools in Chad. By the end of 2024, Chad's refugee response was one of the most underfunded globally, even as it hosted one of the largest refugee populations from Sudan.



Newly arrived Sudanese refugees at the Sudan-Chad border in Adre, Chad

Egypt

By the end of 2024, Egypt had received more than 1.5 million Sudanese refugees, according to government figures. Many sought registration with UNHCR. To keep up with the growing numbers, UNHCR introduced an online registration tool to expand its capacity for appointments. Since April 2023, 901,000 people fleeing Sudan have had registration appointments.

The sheer number of arrivals has placed significant pressure on services, leaving many families without access to health care, education and basic necessities. As well as providing financial support so that refugees can pay for essentials (such as food, rent and bills), UNHCR continues to work with local authorities to ensure access to education and medical care, but resources remain stretched.



UNHCR HQ Refugee Reception Centre in Cairo, Egypt. Eman and her husband Mohamad with their two children Zayad & Ola are registered as refugees in Egypt after fleeing war in Sudan.

Ethiopia

In 2024 more than 67,000 Sudanese refugees sought safety in Ethiopia, with many arriving in remote areas with little infrastructure. UNHCR teams expanded existing settlements and improved access to food, shelter and health care, but the needs remained immense.

In July, the authorities approved a new integrated settlement in Aftit (Amhara region), providing space for 12,500 refugees. Families arriving there received emergency shelter kits, core relief items and food. In Aftit, refugees live side by side with the local population, a “solutions from the start” approach where donor support helps refugees integrate into host communities by supporting access to local services such as health care.

Libya

New arrivals from Sudan arrived in Libya in huge numbers in 2024, growing from 40,000 at the start of 2024 to 210,000 by the end of the year. The journey to Libya is infamously dangerous, and many arrive exhausted, injured and in desperate need of help.

Thanks to the generous support of UNHCR’s donors and partners on the ground, teams were able to provide medical care, legal documents (crucial for many services and safeguarding rights) and essential supplies. By the end of 2024, the total number of Sudanese refugees registered in Libya was 57,648. More than half (38,600) have been registered since the Sudanese conflict erupted in April 2023.

With your support, 6,254 refugees in Libya received financial support to meet basic needs, while 10,899 received mental health and child protection services..

New arrivals face many challenges. Limited capacity in Benghazi, Libya’s second-largest city, has delayed refugee registration, and overstretched water and sanitation systems put inhabitants at risk of disease. With 173,000 Sudanese refugees arriving through the main crossing point of Alkufra alone in 2024, or close to 500 every day, the needs continued to grow. But because of your support, thousands of lives are being protected.

Uganda

Uganda has become a place of hope for many Sudanese refugees after a long and dangerous journey. Over the course of 2024, more than 66,000 arrived in the country.

Many travelled hundreds of miles on foot, fleeing war and crossing multiple borders in search of safety. By the time they reached Uganda, most had already been displaced several times, arriving with little more than the clothes they stood up in, and in urgent need of food, shelter and protection.

Thanks to UNHCR and its partners, every new arrival is registered and receives immediate support. Uganda's welcoming refugee policies allow them the right to work and move freely, offering a real chance to rebuild their lives. But the growing number of arrivals is putting immense pressure on health and education services, as well as infrastructure, while funding shortages are threatening critical programmes.

South Sudan

In just the last three weeks of 2024, more than 80,000 people—mostly women and children—fled the escalating violence in Sudan and headed to South Sudan. By the end of 2024, nearly 1 million people had arrived, most of whom were South Sudanese returnees, overwhelming an already struggling country. Transit centres were packed beyond capacity, leaving many people sleeping in makeshift conditions with limited access to clean water and sanitation.

UNHCR and partners built over 6,200 emergency shelters and hundreds of communal spaces, but the sheer number of arrivals made it impossible to provide enough for everyone. Heavy rains and flooding only made conditions worse.

By the end of 2024, UNHCR had received \$30 million for the Sudan Emergency from private sector donors, with 83 % of that funding coming from corporations, philanthropies and foundations and the rest from individual donors. However, despite this generosity of donors, the response remained critically underfunded.

People fleeing Sudan being registered as refugees in Kyriandongo reception centre in Uganda.



Salim plays at his home in Arkoum refugee camp, eastern Chad.

© UNHCR/Levon Sevunts

IMPACT STORY

Offering hope to children alone in crisis

Under the shade of a canopy at their new home in Arkoum refugee camp, in eastern Chad, Abdoulaye Ibrahim Abakar and his wife, Hawaye Ahmat Abdoulaye, watch as their foster children, Maimouna, 3, and Saleh, 5, play in the sand. The children giggle as they chase each other, seemingly forgetting the turmoil that brought them there.

“I decided that if we die, we will die together,” Abdoulaye says. “I’m not abandoning the children.”

Just months ago, those youngsters had no home, no family, and nowhere to turn.

When conflict erupted in Sudan in April 2023, Abdoulaye and Hawaye made the painful decision to send their own three children ahead to Chad for safety, where they were taken in by other family members. But as the violence escalated, they decided that they, too, had to flee—and their escape turned into a nightmare.

Fleeing an attack on their village in Darfur, Abdoulaye collapsed under a desert tree, bleeding from a bullet wound. His only thought was survival—how to get himself and his wife across the border to safety.

Then, a group of neighbours fleeing the same attack arrived, bringing with them two small, terrified children. Their mother had been killed, their father was missing, and in the chaos, the neighbours had no choice but to leave them with Abdoulaye and Hawaye before continuing their desperate escape.

By the time they reached Chad, Abdoulaye and his wife had lost their home, their land, and life as they knew it. But when they arrived at Arkoum refugee camp, something unexpected happened.

Rumours had spread that Abdoulaye had died in the attack. As he limped into the camp with his wife and the two rescued children, the reaction was astonishment and joy.

“Everyone thought I was dead,” Abdoulaye says. “They were so happy to see me alive.”

His own children were there, waiting. After months of separation, they were finally reunited. And now they had two more children to care for. The children welcomed their two new siblings with open arms.

Chad now hosts over 700,000 Sudanese refugees, with children making up 60 % of arrivals. Many have lost parents to violence, hunger or disease. With no formal child welfare system, the responsibility of care often falls on refugee families themselves.

The children, still grappling with their loss, found more than shelter with Abdoulaye and Hawaye—they found love and belonging. But raising five children instead of three is not easy. Food is scarce, work is impossible to find, and health care is limited.

“The children will live with us as long as I’m alive. What we eat, they will eat,” Abdoulaye says. “I nearly died, but Allah saved my life. I beg Him to save these children too.”

To help foster families like theirs, UNHCR and partners provide training, financial assistance and follow-up visits to ensure the children’s well-being. As of late 2024, 55 families have taken in orphaned children across five refugee settlements in eastern Chad.

Even though Saleh and Maimouna have a new home and a new family, Abdoulaye still fears for the future.

“I want all of my children to go to school and build a better life for themselves,” he says. “I didn’t have that chance growing up.”

For now, survival comes first. But thanks to your kind donations, children like Saleh and Maimouna are surrounded by family love.

In a crisis that has torn so many apart, families are being rebuilt—sometimes in the most unexpected ways.

Abdoulaye Ibrahim Abakar, his wife Hawaye Ahmat Abdoulaye, and their foster children Maimouna, 3, and Saleh, 5, sit under the canopy of their new home at Arkoum refugee camp in eastern Chad.







STAFF PROFILE

Q&A with Benard Okoth

Senior Community-Based Protection Assistant

Can you tell us more about your role?

I work with UNHCR as the Senior Community-Based Protection Assistant in Kiryandongo, a refugee settlement in the middle of Uganda with people from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and, increasingly, Sudan. Everything we do is under community-based protection, which means putting the rights and abilities of the displaced population at the forefront of our programming, engaging them, listening to their voices and involving them in decisions. We also focus on supporting people with specific needs to see how we can support them as effectively as possible.

What has the past year been like for you?

We received a large number of people who fled the war in Sudan, mainly Sudanese. By the end of 2024, more than 60,000 Sudanese refugees were present, mostly women and children. These are highly vulnerable people: single mothers trying to look after their children, older people, people living with disabilities, and many others in need of urgent help. We ensured they were able to access registration, which is provided by the Government of Uganda, and that they are safely relocated and receive basic items. Sudanese refugees, like other refugees in Uganda, are also given plots of land, generously provided by the government.

What do people fleeing Sudan need when they first arrive?

As mentioned, access to registration is important for new arrivals, because it means they have documentation, which in turn gets them access to services and rights. Registering also ensures they have access to land, where they can easily settle. We also provide them with non-food items to help them recover.

What do they still need?

Throughout 2024, we struggled with resources, not least because of the sheer number of people fleeing Sudan who arrived here in Kiryandongo.

In terms of gaps, we are facing a lot challenges. Access to water is really a critical need but people are struggling with the limited water points that we have in the settlement.

These services were meant for 65,000 to 80,000 refugees. But by the end of 2024, we had more than 137,838 refugees here. We desperately need to expand facilities. There is also an urgent need for education, better infrastructure, and providing women and people living with critical conditions with livelihoods opportunities. The support we were able to give them is not enough. We must ensure that they access everything that a human being needs to live a dignified life.

How about opportunities to rebuild and thrive?

There is still a lot that needs to be done. Many Sudanese refugees are qualified professionals but are not able to find jobs in a country where nationals can also struggle to find employment. Many young refugees who were in school in Sudan did not bring certificates proving their level of education and so sometimes find it hard to get

a place in schools here. And in the schools that do operate in this settlement, given the size of the population here there is a lot of overcrowding, as well as problems with the language barrier. Yes, there are private schools in Uganda, but they are very expensive to enrol in. Not many people can afford these schools.

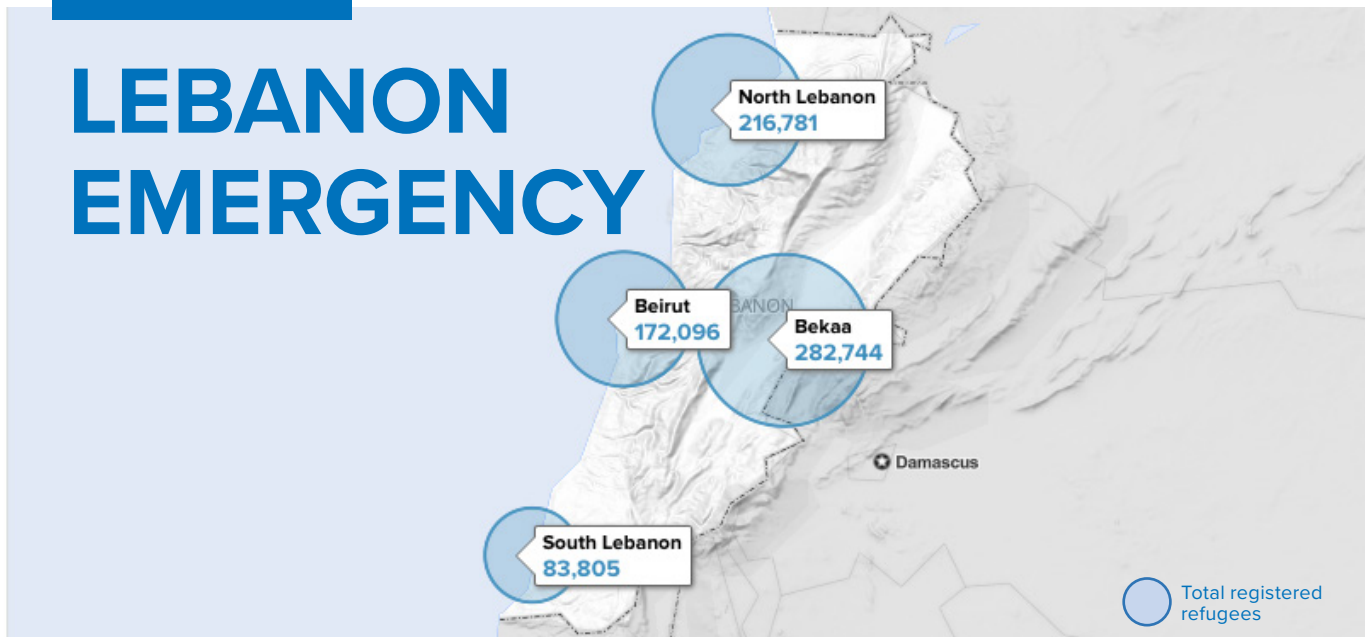
What can you tell us about Uganda and the way it welcomes refugees?

Uganda has an open-door policy where refugees are free to come in. But the challenge over the years, as we continue to receive more refugees, is the dwindling support the country receives. The provision of services is becoming an issue. For example, when you talk to refugee communities right now, they will tell you that they don't have access to shelter facilities, they don't have access to health care, yet most people we receive arrive with health complications, blood pressure, diabetes and so on. This gap needs to be addressed if we are to support the new arrivals.

What could additional donations achieve?

Better education, more classrooms, support for teachers, school stationery. Livelihoods programmes to increase job opportunities and help refugees use their existing qualifications as well as acquire new skills. And access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene. UNHCR and the Ugandan Government are doing everything we can to provide these basic services, but more support is needed if we are to address all these challenges.

DEEP DIVE

LEBANON
EMERGENCY

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

The overall situation and UNHCR's response

On September 23 2024, Israel launched its most devastating airstrikes on Lebanon in decades, plunging the country into crisis. Within days, 120,000 people had fled their homes, and as the conflict escalated, over 1.2 million were displaced inside Lebanon, while 450,000 more were forced to seek refuge in Syria. Families were uprooted overnight, communities were shattered, and the need for urgent humanitarian aid became critical.

Lebanon

The crisis in Lebanon in 2024 was one of the worst the country has faced in decades, with relentless airstrikes across numerous areas leaving entire neighbourhoods in ruins.

Families were forced to flee repeatedly, often with only what they could carry. Within weeks, over a million people were displaced inside Lebanon while an additional 450,000—including Syrian refugees, Lebanese citizens and third-country nationals—were forced to flee into Syria.

Across the country, 100,000 housing units were partly or fully destroyed; in the governorates of South Lebanon and Nabatieh alone, 40 villages were completely destroyed and 15,000 buildings damaged or demolished. Families who had built their lives over generations suddenly found themselves sleeping in makeshift shelters or open spaces, desperately seeking assistance.

Thanks to continuous donor support, UNHCR and its partners rapidly scaled up operations, dispatching emergency supplies from local warehouses.



A UNHCR staff member surveys damage at the Al-Arida crossing point on the Syria-Lebanon border, caused by Israeli airstrikes

UNHCR/Ziad Hanna

Over 258,000 people received essential supplies, including mattresses, kitchen sets and solar lamps, while more than 453,000 received emergency financial support, allowing them to find temporary shelter, buy food and access essential services. For those without safe housing, collective shelters were set up, though they quickly became overcrowded, and many Syrian refugees were unable to stay there. In response, UNHCR expanded mobile protection services, ensuring legal aid, psychosocial support and case management for the most vulnerable, including unaccompanied children and survivors of gender-based violence.

Mental health remained a priority. Thanks to UNHCR donors, over 30,000 people received support to help them manage their trauma, while thousands of people made use of legal and protection services to navigate the challenges of displacement. Protection teams worked tirelessly to reunite families, support children and help those who had suffered gender-based violence.

Lebanon's fragile health care system struggled to cope with the crisis. Hospitals faced an influx of injured civilians, while many medical facilities were damaged or put out of action. To address critical shortages, UNHCR procured and delivered 10 ambulances, 60 trauma kits, 40 non-communicable disease kits, and 10 emergency health kits, ensuring medical care for up to 100,000 people.

Syria

With the bombardment, 450,000 people fled Lebanon for Syria, seeking refuge despite the ongoing humanitarian challenges there. Many Syrian refugees returned to their areas of origin, alongside Lebanese nationals who had no choice but to cross the border. UNHCR and its partners distributed 250,000 emergency relief items, including blankets, mattresses and kitchen sets, to those arriving with nothing. An additional 32,000 people received winter essentials, while 27,500 families were provided with food parcels to survive the harsh weather.

Mobile medical teams reached displaced families in hard-hit areas, providing first aid, maternal health care and emergency treatment. Over 18,000 people received health care through UNHCR's network of 114 community centres and mobile units, ensuring continued medical care despite the destruction.

At border crossings, 48,000 people received legal assistance, ensuring they had the necessary documentation. Many Syrian returnees found their former homes destroyed or occupied, leaving them in limbo. In response, UNHCR scaled up reintegration programmes, helping returnees access shelter and livelihoods.

After the Ceasefire

A ceasefire took effect on 27 November 2024, but the humanitarian situation remained desperate. By 8 December, 40,000 Lebanese had returned from Syria, many finding their homes partially or completely destroyed. Before the end of year, after the fall of the former Syrian government, another 20,000 Lebanese returned home, further straining local resources.

Since the ceasefire, 828,000 displaced Lebanese have attempted to return home but many face severe challenges. UNHCR shifted its focus to shelter and preparation for the winter weather, distributing weatherproofing kits, tarpaulins and construction materials to help families rebuild. In heavily affected areas, UNHCR worked with local authorities to restore access to clean water and sanitation, preventing disease outbreaks in vulnerable communities.

However, thousands remained in need of urgent assistance as winter set in. Fuel shortages, damaged infrastructure and economic hardship compounded the crisis, making recovery even more difficult.



UNHCR staff member surrounded by pallets of humanitarian aid in Beirut warehouse, Lebanon

Thanks to the generosity of our donors—and flexible funding that ensures UNHCR can be agile in emergencies—UNHCR delivered life-saving assistance at a critical moment, ensuring displaced families had access to shelter, health care and protection.

By the end of 2024, UNHCR donors had helped raise \$13.98 million: 63 % (\$8.79 million) from individual donations and 37 % (\$5.19 million) from corporations, philanthropies and foundations. Even so, UNHCR's operations in Lebanon remained critically underfunded, with only 58 % of the required financial support received as of 31 December. Funding gaps have meant shortages of shelter, health care and financial support.

UNHCR staff meets Syrian refugee family who crossed back into Syria fleeing Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon







IMPACT STORY

Rebuilding hope, shelter and stability for displaced families in Mount Lebanon

“This shelter was once a school,” says Yasser Hussein, a Lebanese man who fled his home in Bazouriyeh, South Lebanon, when Israeli warplanes began bombing in September.

Yasser, 55, never imagined he would be living in a school in the heart of Mount Lebanon. Just weeks ago, he had a home, a routine, a sense of stability. But when the airstrikes made it too dangerous to stay, he had no choice but to leave.

Now, Ain Dara school has become a refuge for Yasser and many other families.

The classrooms, once lined with desks, are now packed with mattresses. In the hallways, children play between suitcases and blankets. More people arrive every day, carrying whatever they could take with them. Some, like Yasser, who has four sons and one daughter (the oldest is 16 and the youngest is two) have been displaced for the first time. Others, like many Syrian refugees in Lebanon, know this reality all too well.

Ain Dara is one of hundreds of shelters set up by the Lebanese Government with support from UNHCR. Across Lebanon, about 190,000 people are staying in schools, community centres and other temporary shelters. Many Lebanese who once hosted Syrian refugees in their own homes now find themselves uprooted. The crisis has blurred the lines—everyone here has lost something.



"We were showering outside under the trees in cold water," Yasser says, remembering the early days in the shelter. Now, we are showering in hot water in proper bathrooms.

Thanks to your kind donations, UNHCR teams and partners have repaired windows and doors, upgraded water and sewage systems, installed sinks and bathrooms, fixed electrical wiring, and added partitions so families can have more privacy. Your donations are also making shelters more accessible for people with disabilities.

Wansa Abdalla, a Syrian refugee, sits in a small room with her child. A simple partition now separates her family's space from the others. Wansa used to live in Siddikine, also in the south, with her husband and six children. In September, they, too, were forced to flee to Ain Dara.

"Every family has its own space now, and the situation is better. We now have our privacy."

Wansa Abdalla photographed at the collective shelter in Ain Dara, Mount Lebanon



Honduran refugee Nohemi and her 13-year-old daughter talk at their rented home in Aguascalientes after UNHCR helped them relocate.

For families living in overcrowded conditions, even small changes can make a big difference. Without a modicum of privacy, daily life becomes even more challenging. Parents struggle to care for their children and simple tasks feel overwhelming.

Partitions create a space of their own where they can take care of each other and regain a sense of normality. It might seem like a small thing, but for Wansa and other women forced to flee, it brings a sense of stability and control in an otherwise chaotic time.

Thanks to donors, UNHCR is rehabilitating 450 shelters across Lebanon, with work finished on 135 centres and assessments completed on another 360 sites. It's not just about providing shelter—it's about giving people a safe and dignified place to stay.

As Lebanon struggles with this crisis, UNHCR is on the ground, supporting both Lebanese and refugee families. With your support, people forced to flee have found hope amid the upheaval.



Thousands of refugee returnees cross border fleeing Sudan violence at the UNHCR transit centre, near the Joda border point in Renk.

© UNHCR/Charlotte Hallqvist

STAFF PROFILE

Dalal Harb

Communications Officer



Can you tell us about your role at UNHCR?

I work with UNHCR Lebanon as a Communications Officer and spokesperson. My role is to explain our work to the public so they are aware not only of its impact but also of the needs of the most vulnerable people, whether they are Lebanese or refugees. My job also entails challenging misinformation and other harmful messaging, both about the people we work for and about UNHCR itself.

How long have you been in Lebanon and with UNHCR?

Lebanon is home. I was born and raised here, and I have been working with UNHCR here for the past five years. Even after spending years abroad, there are many things that keep me connected to Lebanon—family, the mountains up north where I was born, the smell of the earth when it rains, the charm in the chaos, and the stark, daily contradictions that remind you that life

is always in motion. Lebanon has been through many challenges over the past couple of years, it has felt almost constant. But despite everything, the love for life keeps the Lebanese people going, no matter how hard things get. It is this deep feeling of belonging that I find both empowering and grounding.

What was the humanitarian situation like in Lebanon over the past year?

This past year was extremely intense. The conflict with Israel came on top of an already enduring social and economic crisis—the worst Lebanon had witnessed in decades. The humanitarian impact was tragic and severe. An estimated 1.3 million people, out of a population of approximately 5 million, were directly affected by the conflict. That's a lot for such a small country.

How has UNHCR helped those who were forced from their homes by the attacks?

When the hostilities began in 2023, UNHCR immediately activated its emergency response to help those affected meet their basic needs and find safe shelter. When the situation worsened in September 2024, we stepped up our support for the 1.3 million affected Lebanese and refugees. We led the distribution of core relief items across the country, supported the government's national efforts to secure safe shelters, and provided critical health care, including psychosocial support.

What has this meant for refugees in Lebanon?

For refugees who had already been displaced once, being forced to flee again was incredibly difficult. But through it all, we were there as UNHCR—to help them find safety, provide essential aid and let them know they were not alone. It wasn't easy, though. The airstrikes made our work dangerous and put even our own colleagues at risk. Many humanitarian workers lost their lives, including at UNHCR. But despite all of this, we made a difference for hundreds of thousands of people.

How has your life and work changed because of the attacks?

I am in my mid-forties and I have lived through wars, conflicts, political and social unrest, financial crises... you name it. Going through yet another war has been painful. My home and family weren't hit but many of my colleagues, friends and relatives were affected. War takes a toll on your mental health. It made me question everything I

have built—whether I should stay in this country, how to support and protect my family, and how to find the energy to keep going at work while life is brutally interrupted. It felt like a marathon with no finish line. Incredibly exhausting. What gives me hope? Knowing that we are making a difference. That's what keeps me going.

What are the biggest ongoing needs now?

The priority remains providing life-saving assistance for all displaced communities in Lebanon with the most basic of needs: access to shelter, health care, basic items and psychological and community support. A real challenge is keeping international support strong for those who need it most; Lebanon has been through such turmoil, and with people facing sometimes multiple displacements, the needs remain very acute.

Why are donations important for UNHCR's work in Lebanon?

Donations are crucial for our work because people are still in desperate need. For the most vulnerable children, parents and older people, even a small amount makes a big difference. Sometimes the impact isn't immediately visible to those who choose to donate, but I see it in the eyes of the children and mothers I meet when I'm travelling around the country to reach those who need it the most. It's real. And it's worth every cent donated.

WEATHER-RELATED EMERGENCIES

© UNHCR/Caroline Gluck

Farzana and her 2-year-old daughter, Arefa are photographed in their flood-damaged home in Ghor in western Afghanistan

Forced displacement and weather-related disasters

Extreme weather, from floods in Afghanistan and Brazil to El Niño's impact in East Africa, has devastated lives—especially for those already displaced by war and persecution. Thanks to our donors, UNHCR responded swiftly, providing vital aid.

Floods, droughts and other weather-related disasters are worsening conditions for displaced people. Today, 90 million people who have been uprooted from their homes now live in high-risk areas, with nearly half facing both conflict and threats from extreme weather—a number set to rise as such hazards intensify.

Afghanistan: rebuilding After devastating floods

Afghanistan has already experienced years of war and economic chaos. Food insecurity has long been a part of life. But in 2024, nature delivered another blow. In the spring, relentless rains turned into catastrophic floods, sweeping through the northeastern, northern and western regions.

Entire villages were submerged, and by early June more than 300 people had lost their lives. Over 10,500 homes were destroyed and tens of thousands found themselves stranded as roads were washed away. Farmers saw their crops and livestock disappear overnight, while essential infrastructure, from hospitals to schools, was left in ruins.

UNHCR and its partners quickly mobilized, bringing emergency shelters, blankets and kitchen sets to families who had lost everything. More than 4,700 households received financial support so they could begin rebuilding according to their needs. Knowing that the trauma of such loss lingers long after the waters recede, psychosocial support services were also expanded.

For those who lost important documents, UNHCR helped restore access to identity papers and legal support, ensuring they could once again avail themselves of vital services.



UNHCR staff deliver aid to displaced people affected by the floods in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

© UNHCR/Ricardo Ara

Brazil: confronting unprecedented flooding

Halfway across the world, Brazil faced its own disaster. April 2024 brought unprecedented rainfall to the state of Rio Grande do Sul, leading to flooding that affected nearly 2.4 million people. This was unlike anything that Brazil had experienced in recent history. Entire neighbourhoods were submerged, cut off from roads, clean water supplies and communication networks. The floods claimed 183 lives and displaced over 600,000 people, including thousands of refugees and asylum-seekers from Venezuela, Haiti and Cuba.

In response, UNHCR worked hand-in-hand with local authorities to deliver relief. Within days, teams had transported 17 tonnes of emergency supplies—hygiene kits, mosquito nets, blankets and solar lamps—to those in need. More than 1,800 people found shelter in 308 relief housing units. For families left with nothing, financial support helped them secure food, water and other essentials.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

With the DRC in the grip of a rapidly escalating conflict, the weather brought devastation of its own. Violent clashes in early 2024 displaced over 300,000 people within weeks. By July, another 1.3 million had fled due to the worsening situation. Amid this turmoil, extreme rainfall battered the region, causing flash floods that destroyed what little stability many displaced families had left.

With support from donors, UNHCR reached over 95,000 people with newly built and rehabilitated shelters, giving families a place to rest and recover. Household essentials like mosquito nets, blankets, and cooking supplies were distributed to 45,000 people. Meanwhile, financial support provided immediate relief to over 3,000 families, helping them meet urgent needs like medical care, food and transport.

In addition, UNHCR protection teams documented over 215,000 human rights violations, ensuring the testimony of victims was heard and recorded.

East Africa and the Great Lakes: the impact of El Niño

The El Niño phenomenon made 2024 especially devastating for East Africa and the Great Lakes region. Heavy rains and flooding swept through Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. More than 3.7 million people in the region were affected. In South Sudan alone, 1.3 million people faced flooding, with 327,000 forced to flee their homes. Fields that had provided food for entire communities were left underwater, making hunger a growing concern.

UNHCR was already preparing for the worst. Early warnings meant teams could move supplies into place before the worst of the floods hit. In Burundi, UNHCR relocated refugee families to safer ground and distributed emergency relief items. In Ethiopia, financial support helped families repair shelters, while in Rwanda, UNHCR strengthened the preparedness of refugee camps with drainage systems and retaining walls.

Somalia saw some of its worst flooding in years, but because teams were well prepared, UNHCR was able to supply over 173,000 people with emergency items, and to distribute survival funds to 2,300 families, enabling them to cope with the worst effects.



Neziya Nsananiye, a Burundian woman whose home was destroyed in the flooding.

Meanwhile, in Sudan and South Sudan, UNHCR teams worked to provide clean water, emergency shelter kits and essential health services to

thousands displaced by rising waters. South Sudanese communities saw flood barriers installed, helping prevent further devastation. And in Sudan, our teams worked to provide clean water, shelter and medical care.

Families who had already been forced to flee violence and persecution are now facing the additional burden of weather-related disasters. They are losing their homes and livelihoods all over again, just when many were beginning to find their feet.

But throughout these crises, support from donors like you made it possible for UNHCR to respond quickly, bringing emergency relief and long-term solutions to those affected.

West Africa

Torrential rains and severe flooding affected over 4.9 million people across West and Central Africa in 2024—nearly five times more than the previous year. Chad (with 1.9 million people affected), Niger (1.5 million), Nigeria (612,000), Cameroon (448,000) and Mali (370,000) were hit hardest, with many refugees and displaced families among those who felt the impact.

Forcibly displaced communities were especially vulnerable, with an estimated 330,000 forcibly displaced people directly impacted in some of the worst-hit areas. The extreme weather made an already difficult situation worse, forcing families to flee once again. By the end of the year, displacement had surged to 14 million people—double the number from five years ago.

With your support, UNHCR provided emergency relief to more than 450,000 people, including shelter, financial support and replacement documents for those who lost everything.

Thanks to your donations, UNHCR teams on the ground also worked to strengthen flood protection and rebuild homes and schools. Because of you, many families were able to get back on their feet.



Indonesia

Sadeqa Bibi was just 19 when she fled Myanmar after her husband was killed in a bombing. On her perilous journey to safety, she and her young son survived hunger, gunfire and weeks adrift at sea before reaching Indonesia. “Having spent days on the water, we were constantly praying to Allah, asking when we would be able to set foot on land,” she said. “There were many people on the river; more than 50 were in a single boat... Among them, around 10 were either dead or near death from gunshot wounds.” UNHCR advocacy efforts with the authorities meant that Sadeqa, her child and her fellow passengers were allowed to disembark safely. “When [they] rescued us and brought us to shore, we were incredibly grateful.”

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Odette and her family fled violence in Saké, walking two days to find safety at the Lushagala displacement site near Goma, DRC. There, a small business grant from UNHCR helped her open a small shop to support her family and supplement their limited resources. “We were woken in the middle of the night by explosions,” Odette said of the moment they left their home. “Gunfire from a nearby hilltop threw us into a panic. We fled immediately. “The next morning, we saw many dead bodies. That’s when we knew we couldn’t go back.” Having her own source of income has been a blessing. “Before, life was good because we could feed ourselves from the food we grew on our land, but now we have to make do with limited resources.” “This small business helps me provide essentials for my family. It’s not much, but it’s something.”



Afghanistan

In Kabul, Razia overcame severe depression thanks to counselling supported by UNHCR, allowing her to rebuild her life. Razia has no doubt about the benefits of seeking help and says she will recommend it to others. She has resumed her teaching work and has even recently become engaged. Mental health support is often crucial for people who have endured the nightmare of fleeing home, and who have often witnessed or experienced terrible violence during the search for a place of safety. “One hundred % I would recommend this to other women and girls,” says Razia. “When I came here, I was deeply depressed and I had so many negative thoughts. I couldn’t talk about my situation to anyone before. But after the help I’ve received, I feel totally changed.”

Brazil

Eugenia Totesaut, a Venezuelan refugee and community leader, is among tens of thousands of people, both refugees and locals, who were affected by severe floods in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul. The state is known for its tradition of welcoming Venezuelans through the government's internalization strategy. Both the displaced and host communities in Porto Alegre united to deal with the impact of the flooding. UNHCR supported their efforts and provided much-needed relief items.

“Our neighbours, like us, were left with nothing and went to shelters in the city,” said Eugenia. “Now, together, we are working to rebuild what is ours.”



© UNHCR/Ricardo Ara



© UNHCR/Tiksa Negeri

South Sudan

When Awad Usman fled his native Sudan and became a refugee in South Sudan, he brought all his years of farming experience with him. Now he grows sesame and sorghum – and this season worked hard to ensure the crop was mature and harvested before the heavy rains and flooding could destroy the fruits of his labour. “This is a country that has suffered from conflict for a long time,” says Awad, 37. “Then flooding comes and adds to the burden.” UNHCR has helped Awad and other refugee farmers by building infrastructure such as dykes and bridges, negotiating access to land, providing money for seeds and equipment, and offering training on weather-resilient farming practices. Awad tops it off by singing to his crops. “It brings me joy,” he says.

Bangladesh

When a devastating fire destroyed nearly 500 shelters in Cox's Bazar, Abdul Motaleb Arkani and Shajida were among the very first to respond. As community health workers, trained by UNHCR, they provided first aid and ongoing health support to affected families. UNHCR is now coordinating reconstruction and bringing essential health services back online. With the help of our partners, all the fully destroyed shelters have been rebuilt according to a new site plan for the fire zone. But Shajida's work is not done. “Cases of diarrhoea are going up because the environment isn't clean,” she said. “People's mental health is also suffering. We try to help as much as we can and refer them to UNHCR's mental health and psychosocial support [team] if we cannot.”



© UNHCR/Mir Mosharef Hossain



Yemen

In Yemen's Al-Jarad camp, Abdullah Ahmed Awad, who fled his home in 2015, spent years struggling to make ends meet. He scraped together some money for a while selling brooms, but this barely met his family's needs. Financial support from UNHCR enabled him to cover his most pressing expenses and plan for a better future. "It has helped me secure essential food supplies, repay debts, and maintain a sense of dignity for my family amid these trying times," Abdullah says.

"It's a step forward, a chance to think about tomorrow rather than just survive today."

Sudan

After fleeing the city of Omdurman in Sudan, Mahamoud Alnaji Teawa, 52, and his family settled in Ajuong Thok refugee camp in South Sudan. With help from his brother, Mahamoud opened a shop and was able to significantly improve his family's living conditions. "I could buy us beds, so as you can see we are not sleeping on the floor as before," he says, proudly showing off the furniture."

In addition, his children are now getting an education provided and supported by UNCHR and partners.



Lebanon

In the night, Wafaa often wakes up to find others in her shelter, in Lebanon's Beka'a region, unable to sleep – out of fear, or because they can hear drones, or to help a less able-bodied relative move about. Or simply to tuck someone in with a warm blanket, for the winter weather is setting in. "It's incredibly difficult to leave your home and life behind," says Wafaa, a Lebanese woman who fled the Israeli bombardment and who has yet to return to her home. "We never thought we would have to live like this." For everyone in the shelter, going to the bathroom or taking a shower is something of an ordeal, given the freezing temperature and the need, even for a moment, to remove warm clothing, shawls and coats.

But it is something even simpler that Wafaa pines for. "What I miss the most is waking up in the morning and making coffee," she says. after the help I've received, I feel totally changed."

Niger

Seybata saw her home in Niamey, the capital of Niger, reduced to a pile of mud by catastrophic flooding that was caused by torrential rains across swaths of West Africa in 2024. It left this 38-year-old Malian refugee and her seven children homeless – again.

“I lost everything in the collapse,” says Seybata of the night it happened. “I didn’t have time to empty the house before it fell. I just grabbed my children and got out.” But with financial support from UNHCR, Seybata was able to buy materials to build a temporary shelter. More importantly to her, she was also able to make sure her children could continue their education.



Ukraine

Eighty-three-year-old Nataliia Simykina remembers 8 July 2024. She was in her apartment in Kyiv with her dog when the air raid alert went off. Neighbours helped her reach a shelter – just before four powerful explosions hit her building, part of the deadly attacks against several cities across Ukraine that day. “When the air raid was over and we got out of the shelter, I saw the damaged house and broken windows in my apartment,” she says. “I had only one thought: I was lucky to be alive.” Nataliia is now repairing her apartment with the help of her neighbours, thanks to materials provided by UNHCR and its partners. “I am very thankful for the support. Now I have hope that I can continue living in my house and stay warm during the upcoming winter.”

Syria

Tabarak, aged 9, is wearing a traditional Syrian robe in honour of Syria’s culture and heritage. But she has never been to Syria. “I was born in Zaatari,” she says of the refugee camp in Jordan that is home to tens of thousands of Syrians. “I have not had the chance to live in Syria. Now that school has finished, I have been reading some history books about Syrian culture and I bought this robe and decided to wear it on this special day.” By the end of 2024, however, with the overthrow of the Assad government, many Syrian families were dreaming of going home. Among them was Mohamed, 36, who fled to Jordan 13 years ago but who recently went home with his family in a bus arranged by UNHCR.





UNHCR staff supports displaced person in Renk, South Sudan
© UNHCR/Reason Moses Runyanga

DONOR IMPACT REPORT 2024

Published: April 2025

Contact us:

UNHCR Donor Content Hub

Global Communications Service

UN City, Copenhagen

donorcontent@unhcr.org



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency