



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

DONOR IMPACT REPORT 2023

Looking back at what our valued supporters
helped make possible in 2023



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Introduction

The number of forcibly displaced people reached a staggering 114 million in 2023, the highest number on record. Earthquakes, floods, new and protracted conflicts forced millions to flee their homes, leaving them in desperate need of humanitarian assistance.

In 2023, UNHCR issued 43 emergency declarations in 29 countries: the highest number of emergencies in a decade.

In February, devastating earthquakes hit Türkiye and northern Syria, where thousands lost their lives and their homes. UNHCR colleagues moved swiftly to respond with lifesaving care, and the donor community followed suit. By the year's end, the emergency was 94% funded, with 32% of those funds coming from the generous support of private sector donors. This funding enabled UNHCR not only to be able to respond in the immediate aftermath of the emergency and displacement crisis but continue to support the long-term needs of those affected. (see p.20)

Armed conflict in Sudan also emerged as one of 2023's most pressing emergencies, leaving nearly 8 million people displaced, including 1.5 million seeking refuge in neighboring countries. Through escalating demands, UNHCR strengthened its efforts to assist refugees and host communities in the region. The private sector generously donated a total of more than \$17M to the Sudan emergency, but given the complexity and breadth of the situation, the crisis remained severely underfunded at year end. (see p. 8)

Underfunding continued to affect multiple protracted crises where UNHCR's work is ongoing, but due to competing demands and being out of the headlines, they did not receive the support they desperately need. This includes protracted crises in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar and Syria, which is now in its 13th year of conflict.

Despite these ongoing challenges, the donor community continued to show their commitment, with private sector donations totaling \$724M in 2023, making up nearly 15% of UNHCR's total income for the year.

The private sector donations also constitute around 39% of all unearmarked funding for 2023, meaning that resources are flexible and allow UNHCR to allocate resources where they are most needed.

Your continued generosity is not just an act of kindness; it's a lifeline for millions, offering hope for refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless people, and internally displaced people everywhere.

Thank you for your continued support to UNHCR and to those forced to flee.

MONTH BY MONTH



January

In Ukraine, plummeting winter temperatures exacerbate an already dire situation, causing civilian casualties, power outages and posing significant challenges for vulnerable people almost a year since the full-scale invasion began. UNHCR and its partners, supporting the Government of Ukraine, are focused on providing immediate humanitarian support to those in need – including many internally displaced families – and contributing to early recovery efforts. As the war continues, we reach more than 2.4 million people with protection services by the end of the year.



[Learn more](#)

February

On 6 February, powerful earthquakes strike south-eastern Türkiye and northern Syria. The earthquakes – and nearly 14,000 aftershocks – claim thousands of lives and cause unimaginable destruction to homes and infrastructure. UNHCR teams act quickly to provide 3 million relief items like bedding, hygiene kits and warm clothing in Türkiye in support of the Government-led response, and protection support to over 300,000 people in the whole of Syria among other assistance. As humanitarian needs continue past the immediate emergency phase, we remain on the ground to help people rebuild their lives. (See detailed impact information on p.22)



[Learn more](#)

March

As March marks 8 years of humanitarian crisis in Yemen and 12 years of the Syria crisis, the Middle East and North Africa region faces compounding humanitarian needs. Yemen remains an underreported but pressing humanitarian crisis in which 4.5 million people are internally displaced. Meanwhile, life is becoming harder for the 12 million Syrians who have been displaced in the region – both as refugees and within their own country – for over a decade. UNHCR and partners provide a lifeline to millions of displaced people observing the holy month of Ramadan away from home. (See detailed campaign impact on p. 44)



[Learn more](#)



April

Armed conflict breaks out in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum, quickly spreading throughout the country. The crisis also sees the catastrophic resumption of inter-communal violence in the Darfur region, trapping civilians and making many areas inaccessible for the delivery of desperately needed aid. In Sudan and neighbouring countries – all of which already hosted large populations of displaced people – UNHCR teams scale up life-saving assistance and continue efforts to access those in conflict-affected areas. (See detailed impact information on p. 8)



[Learn more](#)

May

Cyclone Mocha pummels western Myanmar and southern Bangladesh. As monsoon season approaches, UNHCR and partners help communities recover and brace for further storms: kits are distributed in the refugee camps of Cox's Bazar to help refugees secure their shelters against near-daily deluges while in Myanmar, essential household items are distributed and communal longhouses reconstructed. Severe weather only adds to the hardships faced by communities already living on the brink.



[Learn more](#)

June

The humanitarian situation in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) reaches devastating levels, as cyclical violence perpetrated by armed groups and subsequent displacement continues to impact millions of vulnerable civilians. With 6.2 million internally displaced people, the situation is one of the continent's largest displacement crises. UNHCR scales up its shelter, site management and protection response – however as clashes between armed groups and government forces reignite, the needs remain great.



[Learn more](#)



July

Rising violence drives refugees from Burkina Faso to neighbouring coastal countries including Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Ghana, and Benin. Most of the people fleeing are women and children, many of whom have been exposed to gender-based violence and have suffered psychological trauma. The new influx of refugees puts additional pressure on the stretched resources of host countries and communities, which were already struggling with high levels of poverty and the growing impacts of climate change.



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August

A toxic mix of conflict, severe drought and devastating floods causes a record-high rate of displacement in Somalia – over 1 million people forced to flee their homes in 130 days. Conflict is among the main causes of displacement, while others are displaced by floods and drought. More than 3.8 million people are now displaced in Somalia in total, exacerbating an already dire humanitarian situation where some 6.7 million people are struggling to meet their food needs. Yet, aid agencies have so far received only 22 per cent of the resources required to deliver much-needed assistance this year.



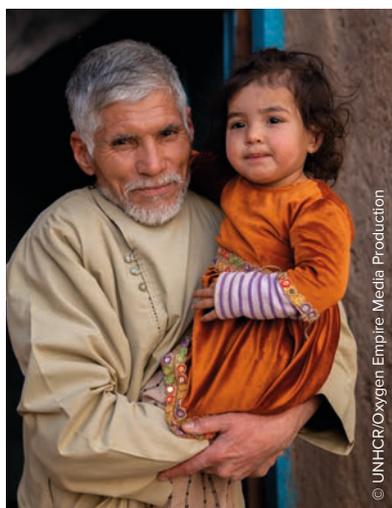
[Learn more](#)

September

As hostilities escalate in Karabakh, over 100,000 refugees arrive in Armenia in less than a week. More than half are older people and children. With 30 years of presence in Armenia, UNHCR teams are on the ground at the border from day one to provide assistance in support of the Government-led response. By the end of the year, we carry out protection monitoring for over 7,300 refugees and provide more than 79,400 relief items to 17,130 refugees across the country.



[Learn more](#)



October

Deadly earthquakes strike Afghanistan's Herat province, reducing homes to piles of rubble. Over 275,000 people are directly affected. UNHCR rushes aid to survivors, including relief items, protection services and cash assistance. But as a harsh winter approaches, the humanitarian situation is dire - two-thirds of the population remain in urgent need of humanitarian aid.



[Learn more](#)



November

As the world's attention turns to the global climate conference COP28, extreme weather events – stoked by climate change – continue. Thousands of displaced families in the Horn of Africa are on the move yet again to escape severe floods caused by ongoing heavy rains across the region. Beyond displacement, people's livelihoods have been gravely affected, with crops wiped out and livestock killed barely months after the longest and most severe drought on record. UNHCR and partners relocate thousands of families and provide relief items, dignity kits, cash assistance, and sandbags.



[Learn more](#)



December

As the year comes to an end, the number of refugee and migrant crossings through the Darien jungle reach half a million - over double the previous year. This roadless stretch of land separates South and Central America and poses a dangerous journey for those crossing. Most come from Venezuela, Haiti, and Ecuador, as well as other countries in South America and the Caribbean. UNHCR, with partners, calls for a comprehensive approach that emphasizes support for host countries, tackles root causes like economic issues and violence, and expands safe migration pathways.



[Learn more](#)

EMERGENCY FOCUS

SUDAN SITUATION



Sudanese refugees and South Sudanese returnees arriving in South Sudan through Joda border point.

Situation and UNHCR's response

On the morning of 15 April, residents in Khartoum, Sudan's capital city, woke up to the sound of heavy gunfire and shelling. Within the first months, the ongoing deadly armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) forced millions to flee their homes. The fighting then rapidly spread to other cities.

Nearly 8 million people have fled their homes, including 1.5 million people who sought safety in neighbouring countries. The impact of the conflict is felt deeply in a region that already hosted a large number of refugees.



South Sudanese refugee Hana in Sudan. UNHCR mission surveys health facilities at Um Sangour refugee camp.



© UNHCR/Ala Kheir

Sudan

From day one, essential infrastructure was damaged and terrified civilians caught in the conflict were trapped across the city, some separated from family members without access to food or water. To assist those in need, UNHCR created the Help Sudan website which provides up-to-date information on relief services, including 19 hotlines and family tracing support.

Throughout the year, clashes between the warring parties continued to escalate, reigniting ethnic tensions and causing unimaginable terror for the over 6 million displaced inside Sudan, one of the largest numbers of internally displaced people globally. Across Sudan, UNHCR has deployed teams on the ground, where access allows, to

provide protection services and life-saving assistance from multiple field locations. With partners and thanks to donors, UNHCR assisted over 455,000 internally displaced people.

In the Darfur region, the conflict has exacerbated inter-communal tensions and saw the return of atrocities, such as ethnic targeting, that had only recently calmed since 2003. The fighting, destruction and effects of climate change in the region, left few routes for humanitarians to deliver essential aid. UNHCR set up an office in Farchana, Chad, to support cross-border inter-agency operations and deliver critical aid to over 37,000 people in West and Central Darfur. This cross-border operation has become a crucial lifeline for the people of Darfur.

The ongoing conflict severely impacted Sudan's healthcare system. Nearly three quarters of health facilities were rendered out of service in conflict-affected states. Between May and October, nearly 1,900 people – most of them children – died in refugee camps in White Nile State alone due to a combination of measles and high malnutrition. Infectious diseases including cholera, dengue, measles and malaria spread where two-thirds of the population lacked access to health care. At least 8,267 suspected cases of cholera, including 224 associated deaths were reported by December.

UNHCR worked with partners and WHO to ensure medicines were dispatched to the relevant hospitals and clinics in all camps. UNHCR distributed generators, tents, and other relief items to health facilities including a maternity hospital.

To respond to the growing needs, UNHCR opened a new office in Wadi Halfa, Northern State, and set up multi-purpose community centers in six states. This allowed UNHCR teams to assist over 130,000 internally displaced people with non-food items such as mosquito nets, blankets, and sleeping mats. In addition, 24,000 people received emergency shelter kits and tents.

To encourage self-reliance and promote the local economy, UNHCR provided cash assistance to the most vulnerable forcibly displaced and host community members. Since the start of the conflict, the generosity of donors helped UNHCR reach more than 100,000 people with assistance, injecting over USD 3.6 million into the local economy.

Neighbouring Countries

The humanitarian crisis in Sudan has devastated an entire region. Nearly 1.7 million people, predominantly women and children, have fled to neighbouring countries. Most of them arrived in Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic, five of the seven countries that border Sudan, some are among the poorest in the world.

UNHCR teams have been present at the borders where people fleeing conflict managed to board buses or travel on foot.

Continued atrocities in Darfur prompted additional displacements to Chad and South Sudan since October and later in the year as fighting spread, more people fled to Ethiopia and South Sudan.

UNHCR teams continued to welcome and register refugees in the countries that are generously hosting them. With the support of host governments and partners, UNHCR is co-leading a regional refugee response plan.

Chad

Chad has received the highest number of people fleeing Sudan; nearly 500,000 people as of December 2023. UNHCR's emergency teams, along with partners met with newly arrived refugees, where they provided protection and life-saving support such as safe drinking water and blankets, and relocated them to camps away from the border. Since the start of the emergency, UNHCR constructed 55,262 shelters.

Central African Republic (CAR)

Since the beginning of the crisis, 25,836 people arrived in CAR from Sudan. Working with partners, UNHCR registered more than 10,614 Sudanese individuals (3,632 households) and relocated new arrivals to a newly established site, and also provided shelter items, hygiene kits and mosquito nets.

South Sudan

South Sudan remains one of Africa's largest refugee displacement situations, with over 2.2 million refugees in neighbouring countries. Since the outbreak of the war in Sudan, 464,216 refugees and South Sudanese returnees crossed the border into South Sudan. Working closely with local authorities and partners, UNHCR set up transit centres near the border where new arrivals were given food, water and accommodation in communal shelters. UNHCR relocated refugees and helped returnees reach their home areas and reunite with relatives.

Hanina, a Sudanese mother in Cairo shares her dreams of peace in her homeland with UNHCR staff.



Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, emergency shelters were constructed at a main arrival point on the border where people fleeing Sudan were provided with warm meals. Since April, 41,495 have crossed into Ethiopia in need of international protection. UNHCR set up a new refugee settlement with plans to expand local services to better integrate refugees with the local community.

Egypt

In Egypt, UNHCR provided safe drinking water and hygiene and sanitary kits at border crossing points. More than 400,000 crossed into the country after a long and difficult journey. UNHCR fully registered 154,000 refugees so they can access cash assistance and services like health care and education.

Since the onset of the conflict in April, UNHCR Egypt assisted 54,521 newly arrived people from Sudan (20,088 households) with one-off emergency cash assistance and supported more than 31,900 Sudanese at the border crossings with medical services.

The conflict put 19 million children out of school. UNHCR provided education cash grants to 10,919 refugee children to support their enrolment in Egyptian public schools and refugee community learning centres. This helped children access safe transportation to school and buy needed stationery.

While needs remain exceptionally high inside Sudan and across the region, UNHCR is committed to continuing to help those who have been displaced by the conflict in Sudan through emergency shelters, relief items and cash assistance. By the end of 2023, UNHCR had received a total of \$196.2M for the Sudan emergency, with \$17M raised from the private sector (IG 53% & PPH 47%).

However, despite this generosity, the Sudan emergency remained severely underfunded, with only 39% of necessary funds raised against the financial requirements of \$506M. Flexible donor support remains critical to helping UNHCR maintain and expand its lifesaving programs.



UNHCR airlifts 80 metric tonnes of core relief items to Chad, from its global stockpile at International Humanitarian City, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in response to the conflict in Sudan.

IMPACT NUMBERS

In Sudan



Over 1 Million
(IDPs and refugees)
were assisted



100,000
provided with cash
assistance



24,000
received emergency
shelter kits



\$3.6 Million
was injected into the
local economy

In neighbouring countries hosting refugees fleeing Sudan



19
hotlines were
established



11
transit centres were
established



10
transit centres were
upgraded



© UNHCR/Insa Wawa Diatta

Sudanese refugee, Zeinab prepares coffee in Farchana Refugee Camp in Chad, where she is now settled after a harrowing journey from Al Geneina.



IMPACT STORY

Zeinab and her children find refuge in Chad

By Lalla Sy

When Zeinab first arrived in Chad, she was overwhelmed by grief. "It was as if I was going crazy," she recalls, struggling with the loss of her husband and the violence they escaped in Sudan.

In Darfur, her family's life changed overnight due to the conflict that stirred up old ethnic tensions, especially against her Masalit community, a long ethnically targeted tribe in Sudan.

Not long after the war broke out in April, violence crept into their home in El Geneina, western Darfur. Gunned men shot her husband and burned down their house. They also killed five of her husband's brothers. Zeinab, only 22, now a single mother of two, had nowhere to go.

"For 45 days, we had nothing to eat but beans. And we could only get water at night," she says. "Then I heard that people were taking refuge in Chad."

Zeinab and her children made a perilous journey from El Geneina. On their way to Chad, the vehicle was stopped by gunned men, and her life was again threatened because of her ethnicity. The driver had to pay 10,000 Sudanese pounds to spare her life.

Arriving in Adré, on the Chad border, Zeinab and her children were desperate; they hadn't eaten for days. The locals helped with food, but living conditions were tough due to overcrowding.

To ease the pressure at the border, UNHCR teams with partners, are providing safe drinking water and blankets and relocating refugees away from the border. Soon after, Zeinab and her children were among the newly arrived refugees that UNHCR teams moved to the Farchana camp.



Sudanese refugee, Zeinab, sitting in a straw shed at Farchana Refugee Camp.

Zeinab, Sudanese refugee, and her son standing on the doorstep of their new shelter in Farchana, Chad.



"I'm very grateful to the humanitarian workers who helped us reach safety," she says.

Chad now hosts the majority of refugees fleeing the war in Sudan. Despite the challenges to support nearly 500,000 crossing from Sudan, generous donations have helped UNHCR to construct more than 55,000 shelters for refugees like Zeinab.

"Before coming here, we had no shelter, no beds, and no toilets," Zeinab shares, "Now, we've been given a house, mats, blankets, and mosquito nets. I feel quite comfortable compared to before."

In her grief, she finds a reason to look forward. "I'm thinking about my children's future, their schooling. And I'd like to take complete charge of them and give them a good education."

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



© UNHCR/Charlotte Heilqvist

STAFF PROFILE

Joel Andersson

Senior Emergency Coordinator, UNHCR South Sudan



As an emergency expert, I've seen many crises over the years, each with its own challenges. South Sudan, a young and fragile democracy, has limited infrastructure to deal with the scale of new arrivals. The government has been very generous, opening their borders to everyone fleeing the war in Sudan, which is quite uncommon in the current global climate.

UNHCR's work in South Sudan is crucial to assist not just the people arriving from Sudan but also the entire country. We need to be here and do our best to help.

In my role as a Senior Emergency Coordinator in South Sudan, I ensure we have the tools needed to respond effectively. We have upgraded or opened new transit centres in Renk, Jamjang, and Maban, where new arrivals are given food, water, and accommodation in communal shelters.

We have UNHCR personnel near all major crossing points from Sudan where we screen, profile arrivals, and coordinate with the government and humanitarian partners to address the challenges. And it has been extremely challenging. The large influx from the north has greatly affected the country. We have refugees from Sudan alongside and South Sudanese returnees who had previously fled to Sudan – some decades ago. These groups require different approaches.

For many, just reaching the border involves a tremendous amount of peril. People arrive with only the clothes on their backs. During the rainy season, roads are underwater and moving people from the border to safer locations is difficult. It's important that people move from the border, but this doesn't happen as quickly as we'd like it to, and we can't always reach the people who have fled.

What keeps me going is a firm belief in our mandate and the work we do. Admittedly, sometimes, it's hard. This year has been particularly tough on UNHCR, with severe funding shortfalls forcing us to scale back on programmes. Every day, we must make compromises on things that we previously would never compromise on.

So far, donations have helped quite a lot. These contributions give us the flexibility to look at problems holistically, covering needs across protection, health, water, and sanitation.

More funds would allow us to provide basic lifesaving services for people crossing the border and help them rebuild their lives. Many young people who were so close to graduating from high school and even university have had their studies interrupted. If we cannot help them continue and finish their education, there is going to be an entire lost generation in Sudan.

While we can't stop crises and conflicts from happening, working with UNHCR means having the capacity to help and truly make a difference for individuals. Once you help an individual, you help their family and all the future generations as well. So, looking at it from that larger perspective, it does give you some driving force.

Sometimes, the hardship forces us to think around corners in a way we might not have done under other circumstances. While it is easy to think that after many years, you know what you're doing, and while it is easy to despair over the state of the world, it's through these experiences that we can learn and find new solutions.

When we are in the field, we meet people face to face and learn about their hopes and aspirations and we are able to understand their needs. Once we've addressed those needs it gives us hope. But there are many things we would like to do that we can't at the moment because we just don't have the funds.

There's a lot more we can do if we have more funds. We would like to have more opportunities to house refugees and help them rebuild their lives, to help students resume their education. In the short term, we need to build more shelters and we need to provide more food, more walking points and more protection.

And it's not just about money. Engagement with the private sector can help to alleviate the pressure, such as improving road infrastructure and telecommunication services, so we can keep delivering and host communities can benefit as well.

We're doing the best we can to keep people and hope alive, making sure people in South Sudan have access to shelter, warmth, and food. It's our obligation and duty to continue to help the people arriving here.

EMERGENCY FOCUS

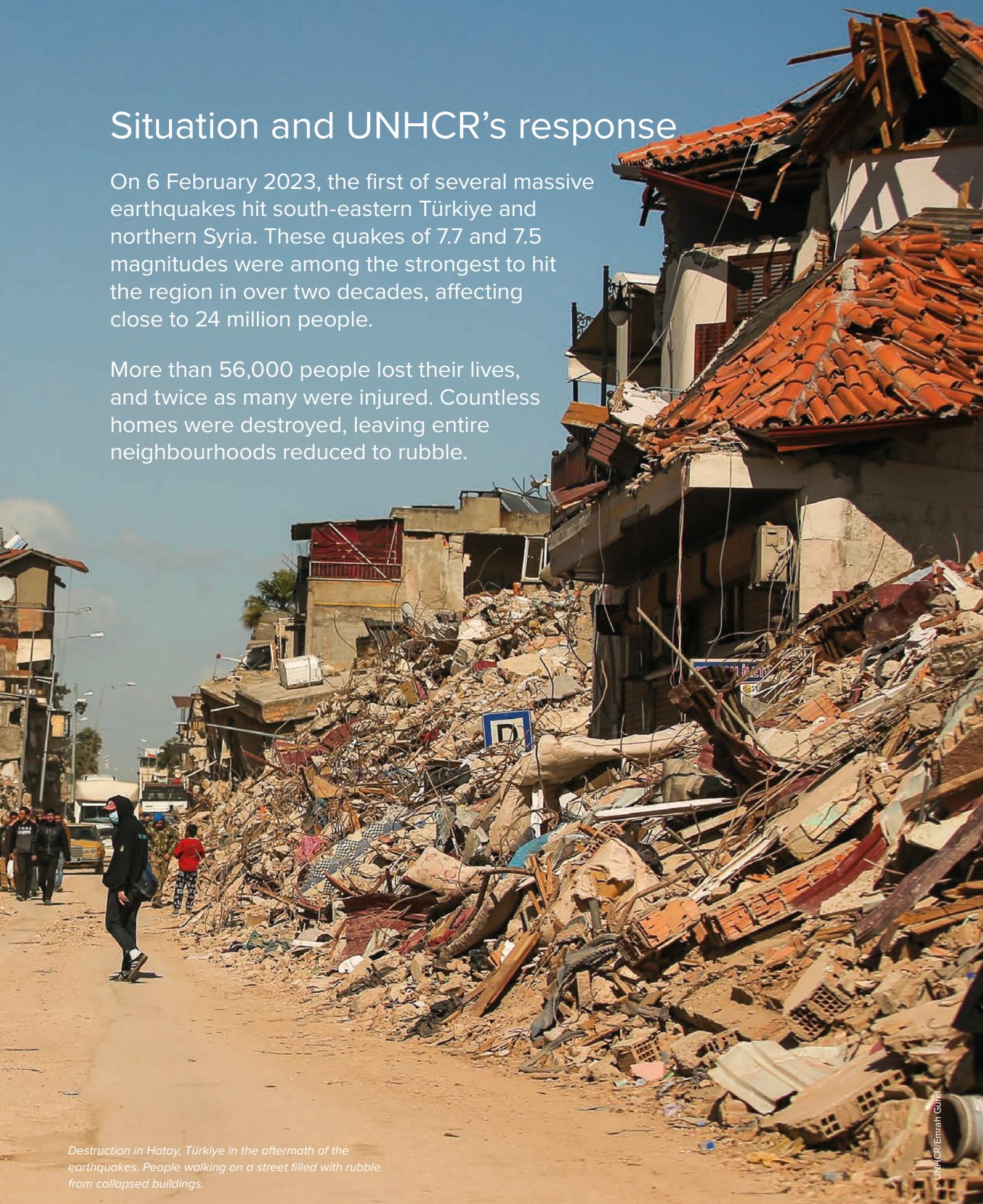
TÜRKIYE-SYRIA EARTHQUAKE



Situation and UNHCR's response

On 6 February 2023, the first of several massive earthquakes hit south-eastern Türkiye and northern Syria. These quakes of 7.7 and 7.5 magnitudes were among the strongest to hit the region in over two decades, affecting close to 24 million people.

More than 56,000 people lost their lives, and twice as many were injured. Countless homes were destroyed, leaving entire neighbourhoods reduced to rubble.



Destruction in Hatay, Türkiye in the aftermath of the earthquakes. People walking on a street filled with rubble from collapsed buildings.

Türkiye

Türkiye is home to more than 3 million refugees and asylum-seekers, one of the world's largest refugee populations. After fleeing conflict in neighbouring countries, many of the 15 million people affected by the earthquake in Türkiye were already forcibly displaced, most of them from Syria.

The 11 provinces hardest hit by the quakes in south-eastern Türkiye, were also ones in which refugees were living in large numbers. The regions the earthquake destroyed were hosting more than **1.75 million refugees**. From the onset, amid the massive destruction, UNHCR teams were already on the ground, supporting the State-led response, identifying and reaching earthquake-affected communities with essential aid. UNHCR teams provided core relief items, legal counseling, psychosocial support, and cash assistance to over half a million people.

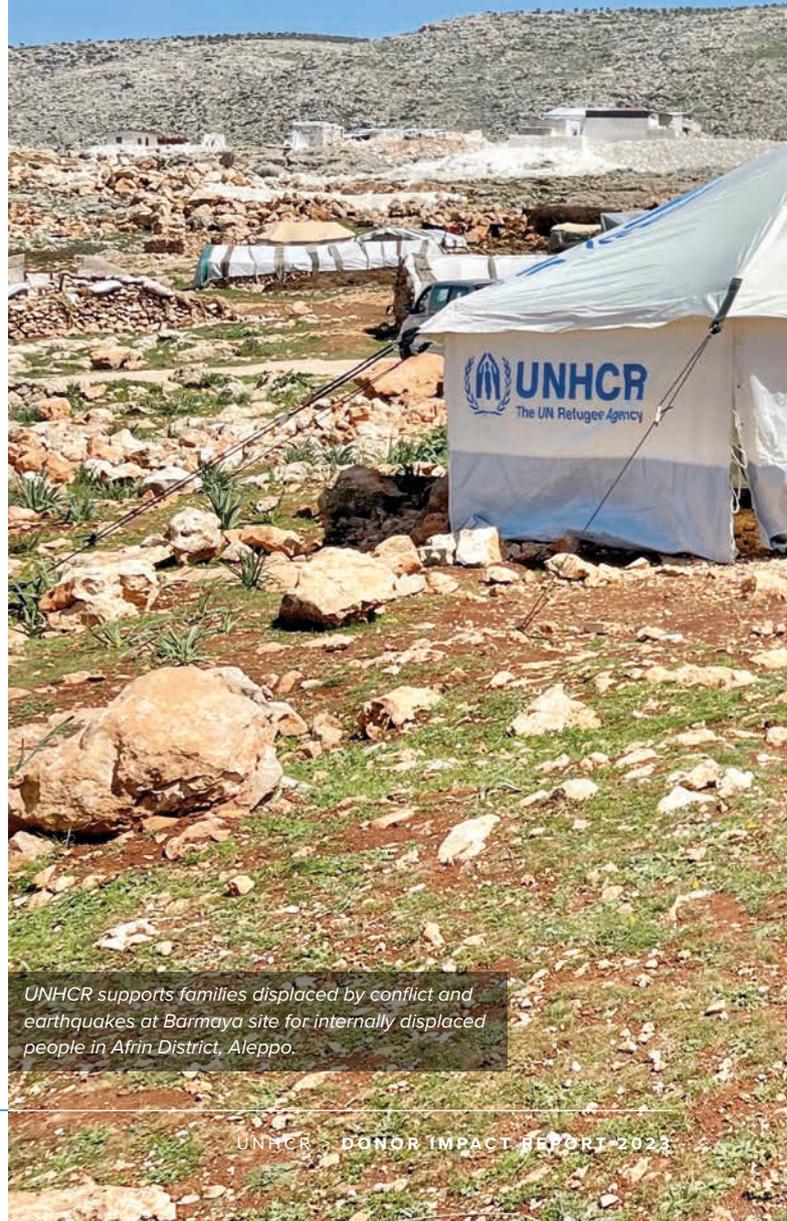
Working with the Government of Türkiye, UNHCR quickly reached refugees and host communities with emergency support through airlifts and by utilizing existing stocks in the country and the region. Thanks to the support of generous donors, UNHCR provided 3 million core relief items in Türkiye alone, including over 2 million sanitary items, 111,750 hygiene kits, and 63,600 kitchen sets.

UNHCR Help websites in Türkiye and Syria helped 2 million people access timely information about relief services.

Syria

In Syria, an estimated 8.8 million people were affected by the earthquakes and thousands (5,900) tragically lost their lives.

The earthquakes struck an area facing one of the most complex humanitarian crises worldwide. In 2023, the long-running crisis in Syria entered its 13th year, which has displaced millions in the region. Of those, 6.8 million were already internally displaced within the country, struggling to protect their families in one of the worst winter storms to hit the region in recent years.



UNHCR supports families displaced by conflict and earthquakes at Barmaya site for internally displaced people in Afrin District, Aleppo.

In north-west Syria, where the aftershocks were deeply felt, two-thirds of the population had already been displaced – sometimes multiple times – due to the long-running conflict. Over 4.1 million people, mostly women and children, were already dependent on aid in that area alone.

Prior to the earthquake, millions of Syrians were facing hardship and unable to cover their basic needs. Thanks to our generous supporters, UNHCR teams mobilized stockpiles and kick-started the response to get much-needed relief items to more than 68,000 people, meeting them in the areas that have been hammered by this earthquake.

UNHCR also provided cash assistance to people affected in Aleppo, Latakia, Hama, and Tartous Governorates, benefiting more than 16,000 families.

The catastrophe also took a toll on the mental and emotional well-being of a long-suffering population. Many have lost family members and friends. UNHCR provided psychosocial support to 311,000 survivors who have lost both their loved ones and their homes.



Winter

In Türkiye and Syria, the earthquakes struck during the harsh winter season, leaving many families twice exposed in their shelters that were either destroyed or became unsafe to inhabit.

Thanks to donors, UNHCR distributed essential winter items. In Türkiye alone, UNHCR provided 261,000 blankets and sleeping bags, and 72,300 pieces of warm clothing.

In northwest Syria, UNHCR distributed over 10,000 tents and around 1000 Refugee Housing Units (RHUs) supporting 53,000 people.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, UNHCR's response was 94% funded by the end of 2023. This would not have been possible without over \$65M donated by the private sector, which accounted for 32% of the funds.

However, refugees, displaced people and local communities are still living in the aftermath of this catastrophe. Critical needs have intensified around housing, basic utilities, shelter, electricity, and health care.

UNHCR continues to monitor and assess the needs including access to basic services such as food, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene. While lingering challenges remain, and new ones surface, UNHCR remains on the ground helping families in Türkiye and Syria rebuild their lives.



UNHCR staff member checks core relief items in a warehouse in Türkiye before delivery.

IMPACT NUMBERS

Türkiye



Over 3 Million
core relief items were
distributed



305,059
refugees received
through the UNHCR
counseling line in 2023



500,000
were supported with
protection services



Over 68,500
people received cash
assistance

Syria



Over 311,000
people reached with protection interventions including over
200,000 psychosocial support, psychological first aid and
awareness raising sessions



58,200
core relief item kits



10,000
tents were distributed





IMPACT STORY

Jamile's new beginning in Türkiye after the earthquakes that turned her life upside down

By Cansin Argun

"I thought the day of judgment has come..." Jamile recalls the moment her house collapsed when the earthquake struck Türkiye on 6 February last year.

"I fell into a crack, but my daughter pulled me out," she adds, her voice heavy with the memory of the earth trembling beneath her feet.

Originally from Ain al-Arab, Jamile and her family are among the 3.6 million Syrians who sought refuge in Türkiye - a country home to one of the world's largest refugee populations.

Living in a three-story building in Kahramanmaraş, one of the worst-hit provinces in Türkiye, escape seemed impossible until Jamile's son kicked open her daughter's room where a window was still visible. Another quake followed, and the home where Jamile lived with her husband and four children was upside down.



© UNHCR/Can Bülük

UNHCR staff assisting the state-led response in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye, and helping survivors who have lost their homes.

"We're on the third floor! How can we jump?" Jamile remembers thinking before her daughter said, "No, Mom, we are on the ground; our apartment descended to ground level."

The family's escape through the window to the ground, now littered with debris, left them injured and exposed to the snow and rain. "We didn't know where to go. Everything was upside down."

Jamile and her family found temporary refuge in a nearby village.

A few days later, they arrived at a temporary emergency camp where they found shelter, food and blankets. "They were very helpful," recalls Jamile, "They gave us water and even clothes. They provided us with everything." Thanks to donors, UNHCR was able to act quickly to support the Turkish State's response to save lives and provide families fleeing the earthquakes with safety and relief items.



After three months, the family was moved to a temporary accommodation centre established by the Turkish State in Pazarçık, Kahramanmaraş. The accommodation consists of containers set up to house refugees and displaced people. Each container has refrigerators, kitchen utensils, food, mattresses, and other household items.

“They bring us boxes with food and other items regularly,” says Jamile with gratitude. “They even brought us lamps. They didn’t leave us in need of anything extra.”

In support of the state-led response, UNHCR provided over 3 million relief items to affected people, refugees and host communities alike. This includes equipping temporary accommodation centres. Despite this, needs remain and the impact of the earthquakes is still felt by both host communities and refugees who are trying to rebuild their lives.

Jamile's hope for a better future for her children remains strong.

“My dream, like the dream of many people, is for my children to learn, to see my daughter learn, and to see my son carrying a school bag.”

STAFF PROFILE

Q&A with Sandra Hadjisavva

Senior Protection Officer in Hatay, Türkiye

What got you into humanitarian work?

I always felt a calling to be engaged and involved in humanitarian work since I was very young. It is fulfilling and rewarding to have the opportunity to be in a position that enables you to help people who may need support in any form of protection – from basic needs like food and shelter to legal protection. I feel honoured to have the opportunity to have any positive impact in protecting people who are forcibly displaced from their homes, whose daily lives have been disrupted, and who, very often, have lost everything.

Can you tell me about your role at UNHCR?

As the Senior Protection Officer, I am heading the Adana Field Unit in Southeast Türkiye (SET), covering the provinces of Adana, Hatay and Mersin. I was initially deployed on an emergency mission with the Division of Emergency, Security & Supply (DESS) to assist in the earthquake response. When the earthquake struck, I was working in Geneva. My first thoughts were of two friends and colleagues based in Southeast Türkiye. One who sadly passed away due to the earthquake. It was very painful and continued to become increasingly devastating as the news slowly started coming in on the scale of the damage and the number of lives lost.



Can you tell us about UNHCR response during the first days of the emergency?

When such big disasters take place, everyone, including humanitarian actors, partners and states, unite to help all impacted. UNHCR has been on the ground since the onset of this tragedy, supporting the efforts of the Turkish state-led response for all the people who have been affected.

Since day one, all colleagues in the Türkiye operation worked tirelessly to reach all affected survivors. Working groups and task forces were formed, and all respective units worked in close coordination to assess the needs and bring millions of supplies from UNHCR's global stockpiles to be distributed to the people in urgent need.

Within the first few days, and as part of the response of the UN family, UNHCR sent three-million core relief items to Turkish authorities, municipalities and partners, including tents, sleeping items, sanitary items, hygiene kits, clothing, heaters and kitchen sets, which were distributed to hundreds of thousands of people. Setting up protection sectors in Gaziantep and affected provinces facilitated a coordinated approach to addressing the vast protection needs across the affected area, ensuring faster referrals and responses.

What were the biggest challenges for those displaced by the earthquake?

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes, as it was wintertime, the biggest challenges were the dire need for access to safe shelter and WASH facilities, clean food and water, and access to healthcare. There were logistical difficulties in the early days as we had difficulty reaching the affected areas because the roads in the region were damaged.

What keeps you going during an emergency?

What keeps me motivated during such crises is seeing how our work is making a real difference—from providing shelter to affected families to the psychosocial support that helps individuals cope with their experiences, for example, in supporting mothers help their children address and deal with the trauma and shock of what they had experienced during and after the earthquake. The dedication of our team in SET, many of whom were personally affected, and the shared solidarity and compassion among everyone involved, give me hope. All throughout my work in the field, especially in the emergency phase of the initial post-earthquake response, I had the honour of meeting some of the most resilient people I have ever met throughout my career.

Anything you witnessed that brought you hope?

I was amazed and inspired to witness the resilience and inner strength of refugees and Turkish nationals. One of the most moving experiences was witnessing the friendship of a Syrian refugee woman and a Turkish woman living in a tented site. Both had lost their homes and husbands— during the Syrian conflict years ago, and the Turkish woman in the earthquake. Despite their tremendous losses and the chaos around them, they found ways to support each other and their community. They set up a system to take care of each other's children, helped identify and address the needs of other site residents, such as helping with translation, and familiarized

themselves with available services to support those in need. What brings me the most hope in my work is the ongoing solidarity we share for our common well-being as human beings, reassuring me that humanity and compassion still exist.

What impact do donations have on UNHCR's work in Türkiye?

Donations have a major impact, and we heavily rely on them to enable us to work and, therefore, serve the people with and for whom UNHCR works. While emphasizing the importance of continued donations, joint action and responsibility-sharing from the international community are needed for us to continue reaching people who need assistance in both refugee and host communities, especially in Türkiye, which has been hosting a large number of refugees for many years.

What are the ongoing needs now?

To this day, the needs remain high, particularly for refugee communities who have been displaced for a second time, for some even more, first due to a conflict situation and now due to a natural disaster. Our focus has broadened to include cash support and legal aid. We are addressing mental health, reintegrating children into schools, and rebuilding communities. Many are only now beginning to deal with mental health needs emerging from the shock and trauma of the earthquakes and to rebuild their lives. Our teams across the UNHCR Türkiye operation continue to provide unwavering support to the affected population in both the refugee and host communities.



© UNHCR/Nicolo Filippo Rosso

Honduran refugee Nohemi at her rented home in Aguascalientes after UNHCR helped her relocate.

IMPACT STORY

Nohemi and Melly find more than safety in Aguascalientes

By Kristy Siegfried

Nohemi*, 35, and her 13-year-old daughter Melly, found refuge in Mexico after fleeing Honduras.

Nohemi and her daughter, Melly, arrived in Aguascalientes, Mexico, stepping off a bus into a new life far from the dangers they left behind in Honduras.

"It was really pretty, and the people were nice... but coming to a new place on your own is complicated," Nohemi recalls.

Back in their home city of San Pedro Sula, Nohemi worked in the local police's investigative division before changing her career path to become a physical education teacher.

Yet, despite her efforts to start anew, gang violence shadowed her family's life, forcing them to flee when back-to-back hurricanes and flooding struck northern Honduras in November 2020.

"People would go to shelters, and the gangs invaded their houses... they took over the area where I was living," she says, explaining the terrifying reality that pushed them to leave everything behind.

*Names have been changed to protect identities.



© UNHCR/Nicolo Filippo Rosso

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

Upon reaching Mexico, Nohemi and Melly initially aimed for the United States. But their plans changed when Nohemi learned about UNHCR's integration programme which runs in 11 cities in Mexico, including Aguascalientes. "I didn't know anything about the city, all I had was a bit of background from UNHCR," she says, "They talked about Aguascalientes being safe and I said: 'That's the place'."

Every day, families and individuals escaping conflict, violence, or persecution seek safety at Mexico's southern border. The integration programme, led by UNHCR, helps refugees like Nohemi relocate to cities with more opportunities.

Through the programme, they can secure job placements, housing assistance, and support in accessing education, healthcare and other essentials for starting over.



Although safety was her main concern, Nohemi's leap of faith led her to secure full-time employment at a pharmacy.

With only one day off a week, she tries to spend it coaching Melly, who runs track, and attending her competitions.

Still, Nohemi looks to the future with hope, eager to return to teaching and ensure a bright future for Melly. "If I work in education, it's going to give me more time with my daughter," she says.

She has managed to acquire a few pieces of furniture for their small home on the outskirts of Aguascalientes, as well as a cat and an unruly puppy called Bella, to keep Melly company while she is at work

"I never thought I'd have a good quality of life in such a short time," Nohemi says, "My goal is to stay here forever. I really like this city, it's very safe and peaceful."



UNHCR/Hélène Caux

Young climate and environment activists plant a mango tree in Tongogara refugee camp.



IMPACT STORY

Making Zimbabwe's Tongogara camp a greener place

By H el ene Caux

In Zimbabwe, young refugee volunteers living in Tongogara refugee camp dream of a greener future.

Jeanne Muhimundu, a 21-year-old refugee from Rwanda, vividly remembers when Cyclone Idai struck the camp in 2019. Strong winds and torrential rains severely damaged homes, including her own.

“All these disasters made me realize how people can lose their livelihoods, their houses; how their lives can change in a minute” says Jeanne about the displacement of many refugees and locals in the area.

The Tongogara camp is home to 16,000 refugees, mainly from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mozambique and Rwanda. Like other camps in the southern Africa region, it is regularly exposed to floods and cyclones, as well as heat waves. Since then, although less severe, cyclones Charlene in 2021 and Ana in 2022 also impacted the camp.



© UNHCR/Hélène Caux

Youth activist and refugee Jeanne proudly shows the baby mango trees she plans to plant in Tongogara refugee camp as part of tree planting activities.

Young climate activists in the camp are not merely standing by until the next disaster. “What I experienced and witnessed in the camp made me want to act,” says Jeanne, explaining her decision to join the Refugee Coalition for Climate Action (RCCA). “I used to find shade under the trees...That doesn’t exist anymore,” adds Elie Tshikuna, 23, from the RC, who is another young climate activist and founding member of the RCCA.

With the support of UNHCR, the young volunteers are working against all odds to preserve their environment and sensitize camp residents to the impacts of climate change.

Although they initially faced resistance, they find joy in conducting sessions to raise awareness about the importance of their work.

“We educate refugees on the issue of climate change and its impact. We also tell them it is a very serious issue globally and what they can do to mitigate its effects,” says Jeanne.

UNHCR is also promoting the use of alternative sources of energy. We installed solar systems to power five water boreholes in the camp, replacing the usual diesel-powered generators. In the region, UNHCR is delivering sustainable core relief items to disaster-affected communities.

Since 2020, with more than 50 volunteers, the young RCCA activists have planted around 2,000 trees in and around Tongogara, including mango, macadamia, pawpaw, lemon and orange trees that have additional benefits for the community.

The trees act as windbreakers during storms and prevent soil erosion. In the summer, they provide shade from temperatures that can reach 45° Celsius.

“Some of the damage done to the Earth is irreversible. But my hopes are that we act in time to stop climate change or reduce its effects,” says Elie.

For now, the activists continue to expand their network and plant seeds of hope for their communities and for generations to come. “This is how the Earth heals,” adds Elie.



Youth climate activist and refugee Elie in Tongogara camp, Zimbabwe.





CAMPAIGNS

Global fundraising campaigns raised over \$61 million in 2023

UNHCR's Winter Campaign 2022-23 has, to date, raised over \$30 million to help refugees survive harsh winter conditions in Ukraine, Afghanistan and in the Middle East and North Africa. UNHCR's Aiming Higher Campaign exceeded its target by \$1.7 million in 2023 raising \$24.7 million to fund 1,929 scholarships for higher education. This has been raised by donors from 17 countries who continue to generously support scholarships. Due to its success, the Campaign has been extended to 2030. The Ramadan Campaign was launched globally for the fifth time raising \$13.2 million in 2023. The Campaign provided support for more than 120,000 families in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Yemen, Indonesia Tunisia, Nigeria, India, and Somalia. Finally, the Hardest Hit by Hunger appeal raised \$5.3 million allowing UNHCR to provide cash assistance to help refugees and displaced people affected by food insecurity to feed their families.

Ramadan

Ramadan is a time of togetherness, celebration and caring generosity. Every year, millions of Muslim families and others around the world show compassion for people who've been forced to flee their homes. In 2023, UNHCR's global Ramadan Campaign raised a total of \$13.2 million. More than half these funds came from Zakat income, reflecting the solidarity of the Islamic world with UNHCR's cause. Overall, the 2023 Ramadan Campaign provided support for more than 120,000 refugee and internally displaced families in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Yemen, Indonesia Tunisia, Nigeria, India, and Somalia.

Aiming Higher

Donors continued to show their support for talented refugee scholars in 2023. For the third year of the Aiming Higher Campaign supporters around the world sent a clear message of solidarity to bright young refugees on their journey towards higher education. Thanks to wonderful donors like you, the Aiming Higher Campaign raised \$8.2 million in 2023 alone, making a total of \$24.7 million since its launch in December 2020 for the UNHCR Refugee Scholarship Program (DAFI) and 1929 scholarships awarded to date! With your generous support, another 642 four-year scholarships have been funded this year. Investing in higher education is an investment not just in the students – the leaders and role models for tomorrow – but in their communities.

DAFI scholar Liudmyla studying Business Management in Slovakia after fleeing Ukraine.



© Liudmyla



Refugee family endures cold winter in Azraq camp. Father of six Khalid holds his daughter.

© UNHCR/Claire Thomas

Winter

“Refugees face harsh conditions during the winter inside the Zaatari camp [...] UNHCR has an important role to play in alleviating the suffering of refugees during the winter. They distribute gas heaters to all residents of the camp since the beginning of the camp establishment, with the continuous distribution of cash assistance for heating gas every winter, as heating is one of the most important needs of refugees in the winter,”

says refugee journalist Alaa who lives in Za’atari Camp in Jordan.

Hardest Hit by Hunger

Caught between climate change and new and protracted conflicts worldwide, people forced to flee are the hardest hit by hunger. Through failed rainy seasons, natural disasters, and funding shortfalls, the global hunger crisis is reaching unimaginable proportions. This leaves families exposed to protection risks and often left to resort to negative coping mechanisms due to hunger. Overall, Hardest Hit by Hunger Campaign has raised \$5.3 million which has allowed UNHCR to provide cash assistance to refugees and displaced people, helping them to feed their families again and improve the protection situation in food security emergencies. 95% of UNHCR's cash assistance is unrestricted, meaning people can choose how to spend it and how best to meet their own needs. In 2022 and 2023, food was consistently rated among the top two expenditures of people receiving cash assistance.



Recent climate change and droughts in Ethiopia's Somali regions displace thousands of families.

YOUR FUNDS IN ACTION

CASH ASSISTANCE

Every day, people forced to flee must choose between putting food on the table, buying medicine, or warm clothes for the coldest months of the year. They arrive in sometimes unfamiliar places, leaving everything behind, often losing entire savings, sources of income and belongings.

UNHCR’s cash-based interventions help protect refugees and displaced people by filling that gap in a dignified and urgent way. This allows them to prioritize their own needs, giving them the flexibility needed to deal with sudden shifts in times of uncertainty.

In 2023



More than 7 M
persons receiving cash assistance



US \$750 M
cash assistance reached people



More than 100
operations with UNHCR cash assistance



80%
of recipients accessed cash through digital means, a 4% increase from 2022



540 M
through CashAssist



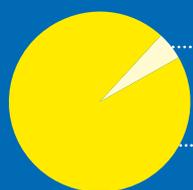
36%
recipients accessed cash through banking or mobile money platforms



Over 90%
of cash recipients who were interviewed responded that this assistance helped improve their living conditions and well-being



Common cash arrangements in **30 countries**



5% restricted cash
95% unrestricted cash

Countries with the largest cash assistance operations:

Ukraine, Lebanon, Moldova, Jordan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan, Iraq, Egypt, and Poland.

CORE RELIEF ITEM

Whether forced to flee conflict, persecution, or a climate crisis, refugees and displaced people leave everything behind. They make these journeys under extreme circumstances, arriving with little but what their hands can carry. 2023 saw the largest number of emergencies yet. UNHCR teams are on the ground, ready to support them during and after an emergency has occurred.

Even before an emergency hits, we ensure our stocks are ready. With the help of flexible donations from caring supporters, our teams can maintain lifesaving stockpiles in seven strategic hubs around the world: Accra, Amman, Copenhagen, Douala, Dubai, Nairobi and Panama City. These warehouses are part of our global logistics and supply chain, designed to deliver urgent core relief items in the critical first days of an emergency

By land, air, and sea, we have dispatched over 7.4 million essential supplies, enough to serve up to 16.7 million people around the world in 2023. These items include:



UNHCR's Team and Emergency Deployments

Our strength lies in the dedication, compassion, and expertise of our team members. Together, we are driven by a world-changing goal: to serve and help improve the lives of people forced to flee their homes.

From protection officers and logisticians to health professionals and engineers and dozens of other roles and responsibilities, we seek to bring hope and stability to refugees, asylum seekers, stateless people, and displaced people around the world.

Emergency response is one of our biggest priorities. To ensure we are always ready, our team members are prepared to deploy to any global location at a moment's notice to provide essential aid where it's needed most.

The generosity of our donors plays a crucial role, your support is a lifeline, enabling us to save lives and deliver critical assistance in challenging and rapidly changing situations.



20,871
people in UNHCR's total workforce



165
nationalities within the total workforce



72%
of team who serve within the countries where they're from



143
countries in which we're located



More than 90%
of team members serve in field operations



UNHCR airlift brings emergency relief aid to flood-affected people in Libya.

© UNHCR/Ziyed Alhamadi



Eliza sits with her 4-month-old son at the UNHCR transit centre near the Joda border point in Renk, South Sudan after fleeing Sudan.



© UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

DONOR IMPACT REPORT 2023

COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

A UNHCR staff member standing next to an earthquake survivor in the aftermath of the earthquakes that hit Türkiye.

© UNHCR/Can Bildik

