

# East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region

## January – March 2023



—Emun, a refugee mother from Eritrea outside her shelter in Alemwach settlement in Ethiopia with two of her children. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

### KEY FIGURES (AS OF 31 MARCH 2023)

**4.99M** Refugees and Asylum-seekers

**11.71M** Internally Displaced Persons

**33,153** Refugee Returnees in 2023

### REFUGEES & ASYLUM SEEKERS TOTALS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

SOURCE COUNTRIES\*

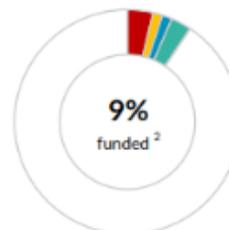
South Sudan	2.25 M
D.R. Congo	794K
Somalia	633K
Sudan	354K
Eritrea	339K
Burundi	285K
Ethiopia	154K
Rwanda	27K
Other	160K

\*The figures here refer to refugees and asylum seekers hosted within the EHAGL region. They vary slightly from the situation figures provided above, as the situation figures also include those hosted in non-EHAGL neighboring countries region (e.g. DRC, Chad)

### FUNDING UPDATE (AS OF 31 MARCH 2023)

**USD 2.1 Billion**

2023 financial requirements for the EHAGL region



### EAST HORN AND GREAT LAKES

as of 28 March 2023

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

## OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (EHAGL) region is currently hosting 4.99 million refugees and asylum-seekers, as at the end of 31 March 2023. The majority of these refugees are from South Sudan, with 2.25 million people having fled. Additionally, a further 11.71 million people are internally displaced in the region as a result of conflict and natural disasters. A total of 33,153 refugees were documented as having returned to their countries of origin between January and March 2023.

Conflict and insecurity in the region continued to intersect with the emergency drought situation. As conditions worsened, hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee in search of safety and assistance.

A new emergency added to the humanitarian needs in Ethiopia and Somalia following the outbreak of violence in Las Caanood, Somalia, leading to the displacement of thousands within Somalia and some 100,000 crossing the border into Ethiopia.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### SITUATIONAL UPDATES

**DROUGHT SITUATION:** The Horn of Africa continues to face a severe humanitarian crisis, with millions of people in need of assistance due to a combination of drought, conflict, and inability to provide for basic needs. The region has been hit by a series of droughts in recent years, leading to crop failure and a lack of water and food. To respond to the immediate needs of the displaced populations in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, on 28 February, UNHCR launched [The Horn of Africa Drought Situation Appeal January - December 2023](#) seeking USD 137 million. The appeal targets 3.3 million internally displaced, refugees, asylum seekers and their host communities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

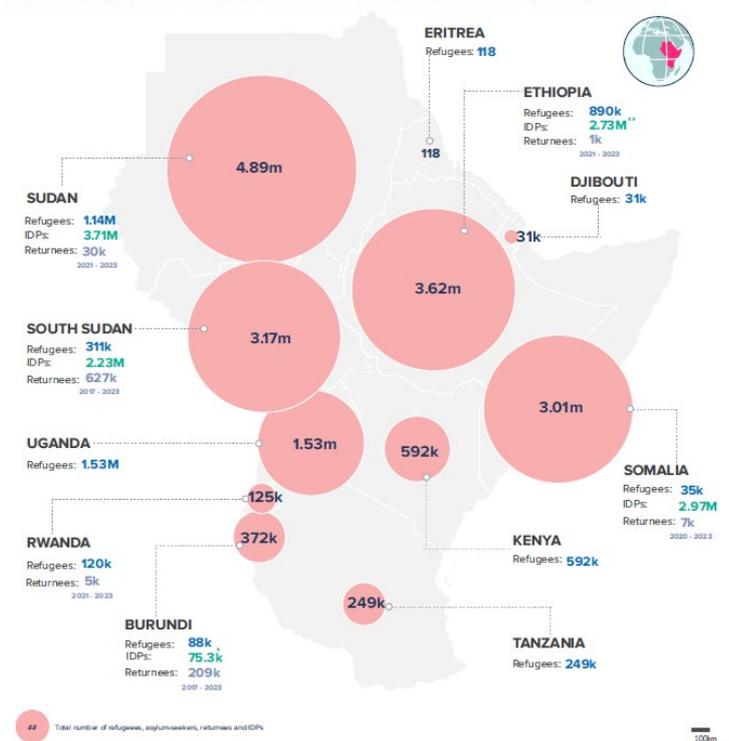
According to [UNHCR's dashboard of displacement](#) affected populations, by the end of March 2023, some 1.94 million had been internally displaced in Somalia and Ethiopia, while over 286,000 new refugee and asylum-seekers have crossed into drought affected areas of Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia since January 2022.

**Somalia** continues to face the longest and the most severe drought in its recent history, due to the failure of five consecutive rainy seasons, with a sixth failed rainy season predicted. Despite the increased humanitarian response in Somalia, the country is still facing life-threatening food and water shortages due to the destruction of harvests, livestock, and income. Prices of essential commodities remain too high for many people to afford, and the combination of climate change and conflict displacement has left millions in need of food assistance. Despite the recent heavy rains and flooding, shortfalls in humanitarian funding and forecasts of high ground temperature and below-average rainfall suggest the drought's consequences will persist. According to the [UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#), 823,000 displacements within Somalia were recorded between January and March. Out of the 823,000 displaced, 133,000 were attributed to floods, 246,000 to the drought, 429,000 to conflict/insecurity, and 15,000 to other reasons. The top humanitarian needs of the displaced families were food (57%), followed by shelter (25%), and livelihood (8%).

In **Ethiopia** the drought situation has continued to worsen following five consecutive failed rainy seasons and the looming "lean season" (period between harvests), with the southern and eastern parts of the country mainly affected. An estimated 13 million people are targeted for humanitarian response in drought affected areas in the Humanitarian response Plan (HRP) 2023. Over 20.1 million people are food insecure in various regions, including 2.73 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and 1.88 million returnees ([OCHA Situation Report April 2023, Humanitarian Response Plan, 2023](#)). The situation is getting more critical with each failed rainy season and has severely impacted pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities, particularly in the eastern and southern parts of the country, aggravating food insecurity, malnutrition, access to water and a worsening health situation with an increase of disease outbreaks.

In **Kenya**, the drought situation remains critical in 22 of the 23 Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) counties of Kenya. The long rains commenced on 21 March. Flash floods were reported in parts of Lagdera sub-county and Saretho village in Dadaab sub-county affecting 100 households and destroying road networks between Garissa and the two sub-counties. Despite the reported rains in most parts of the country in the last weeks of March, the rains are yet to impact production systems. Turkana West also received traces of rainfall that resulted in isolated incidents of flash floods which destroyed shelters of displaced persons in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi settlement.

REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS, REFUGEE RETURNEES and IDPs as of March 2023



**NORTHERN ETHIOPIA SITUATION:**

**Ethiopia:** The overall situation in Tigray continued to improve and in January fuel stations were repaired and services resumed. The government established a task force to ensure an uninterrupted daily supply of fuel transported from Djibouti port to the Tigray region.

UNHCR's High Commissioner undertook [a visit to Ethiopia](#) in February where he met with senior government officials and displaced communities including Eritrean refugees. The High Commissioner reaffirmed his commitment to support the humanitarian response for refugees and internally displaced people in Ethiopia and work towards achieving long-term solutions, including for those displaced by drought and the impact of climate change. Since the peace deal was signed in November last year, UNHCR and other partners have been able to scale-up the delivery of much-needed assistance including medicines, shelter materials, clothes, household items and blankets. During his visit, the High Commissioner also met with Ethiopia's President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and other officials, whom he thanked for Ethiopia's continued hospitality towards refugees.

The High Commissioner, UNHCR's Regional Director for the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, and UNHCR's Representative in Ethiopia visited Tigray and Amhara regions. In Tigray, the delegation met with the AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission (AU-MVCM) in Mekelle followed by a Northern Ethiopia All Staff meeting in the Mekelle Sub-Office. The High Commissioner expressed his warm thanks to the colleagues who stayed and delivered throughout the conflict and affirmed that UNHCR will continue to support IDPs to return to their homes. The High Commissioner also visited the Mai Woini IDP site in Mekelle, where he met with IDP families.

In the Amhara region, the delegation visited the Alemwach refugee settlement with the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) Director General where they met with refugee representatives and discussed various concerns affecting refugees including security and movement restrictions. The High Commissioner noted the suffering and resilience of the Eritrean refugees and appreciated their readiness for reconciliation after the crisis. He reiterated UNHCR's commitment to advocate for refugees to be considered in the peace process by all parties.

UNHCR and partners continued to support vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs with various forms of assistance across the Tigray region including through cash assistance, distribution of dignity kits, clothes and provision of family tents.

**Sudan:** A total of 170 new arrivals from Ethiopia were recorded in March, entering eastern Sudan through Taya (104), Gallabat (31) and Hamdayet (35) border crossing points including 151 Ethiopians (125 Qemant and 26 Tigrayan). The majority of the Tigrayan new arrivals noted that they had escaped their areas of origin in Ethiopia a while ago but had not been able to cross the border into Sudan. As a result of the reduced military presence at the border areas following the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement and its implementation, the routes opened up, allowing them to enter eastern Sudan. Most of the new arrivals (more than 77%) are adult men, followed by children (12%) and women (almost 10%). Between January and March, a total of 408 new arrivals have been recorded (75% of whom are Qemant).

**BURUNDI SITUATION:** By the end of March 2023, countries in the Great Lakes Region were host to 329,779 Burundian refugees. The country has experienced relative political stability since the political transition in May 2020 and the overall political, working environment and security situation have improved.

UNHCR and partners have been facilitating the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees since 2017. More than 210,000 Burundian refugees had been recorded as having returned by the end of March 2023. Majority of them are from Tanzania, followed by Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and other countries in the region. These returns take place under the framework of the Tripartite Agreements between the Government of Burundi, the Governments of countries of asylum, and UNHCR, with all parties having committed to respect the voluntary nature of these returns.

Upon arrival of returnees in their areas of return, UNHCR and its partners has been conducting follow-up activities to review their level of reintegration. Monitoring data indicates a low capacity of returnees' access to basic social services, which makes some refugees remaining in countries of asylum reluctant to return. Despite efforts by the Government of Burundi with support from humanitarian and development actors, access to housing, land, and employment remains a major challenge. In addition, over 70 percent of returnees are not satisfied with their level of food security. Nevertheless, there have been improvements in the security and justice sectors (land dispute resolution) compared to previous years.

The enrolment rate of school going children increased in the first quarter of 2023 to 52% compared to 50% in 2021. The increase in the enrolment rate could be attributed to the fact that 69% of the children received birth certificates in 2022 or since some children arrived towards the end of 2022, at the end of the second semester.

**SOUTH SUDAN SITUATION:** The South Sudanese refugee population, the largest in the region, remains extremely vulnerable. There are 2.3 million in camps, settlements, and urban areas living in precarious conditions, exacerbated by the lasting economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the looming drought and food insecurity situation. As of 31 March 2023, 37.6% of the refugee population was hosted in Uganda, 35% in Sudan, 18% in Ethiopia, 6.8% in Kenya and 2.5% in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

With the commencement of the 24 months of the Roadmap Peace Implementation, the President of South Sudan met with the representatives of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from various camps across the country in February. This is the first time the

President Kiir had met with IDPs since the outbreak of the conflict in 2013. The President's session with IDPs was organized under the theme: Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Peace, and Resettlement aimed at promoting the spirit of unity among the people of South Sudan. President Kiir appealed to the IDPs to return to their respective areas of origin or opt to be resettled in Juba.

Equally during the month of February, the First Vice President met with the IDPs at the Juba IDP site for the first time in 10 years to honor an invitation extended to him during the Pope's visit to South Sudan. Addressing the IDPs the First Vice President appealed to IDPs across the country to think about leaving the camps, where they have stayed for ten years, and rebuilding their lives.

On 21 February, UNHCR together with 108 humanitarian and development partners launched the [2023 South Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan](#). The South Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) is an annual comprehensive multi-agency response that outlines the strategies and actions needed to respond to the ongoing South Sudan refugee crisis in the five main countries of asylum: the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. In 2023, it includes the financial requirements of all partners, involving a range of UN and NGO/ civil society humanitarian and development actors, to meet the critical needs of over 2.2 million refugees and asylum-seekers and 1.89 million members of their hosting communities. The interagency response plan is developed according to the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) and draws from the response plans developed in each country.

**SOMALIA SITUATION:** At the end of March 2023, there were 696,703 Somali refugees in neighbouring countries. According to [UNHCR Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#) 822,000 new internal displacements were recorded between January to March 2023, with 133,000 of the new internal displacements recorded in March alone as a result of floods. The district worst affected by the floods is Baardheere in Jubaland State, which has recorded a total of 21 fatalities, including six children. Somalia currently has a total of 2.97 million internally displaced as a result of conflict and natural disasters.

The security situation in Somalia remained tense and unpredictable resulting in fatalities, injuries, and displacement within the country. The armed conflict between the coalition of Somali National Army (SNA), local clan militias, and international security partners against the non-state armed group continued on multiple fronts, including Hiran, Middle Shabelle, and Galgaduud regions. In addition, drought continued to impact the lives and livelihoods of ordinary Somalis. Somalia continued to face the longest and the most severe drought in its recent history, due to the failure of five consecutive rainy seasons. Reduced access to water, and the ever-shrinking pasture affected pastoralist and agrarian communities throughout the region, forcing them to leave their places of origin in search of water, food, pastures, or humanitarian assistance.

**LAS CAANOOD SITUATION:** Violence in the Somali city of Las Caanood in early February triggered a mass displacement of civilians, including across the border into Ethiopia. Since the first week of February 2023, an estimated 285,000 people have been uprooted from their homes, including approximately 185,000 internally displaced and nearly 100,000 as refugees in Ethiopia. These recent clashes and the resultant displacements are compounding the already fragile humanitarian situation in the region which is grappling with the worst drought in 40 years. The new arrivals, mostly women, children and elderly people, temporarily settled across more than 13 locations in the towns of Bokh, Galhamur and Danot Woredas in Doolo zone, in the Somali region of Ethiopia. In an extremely remote area with a limited humanitarian presence, local communities in Doolo generously welcomed the refugees, sharing whatever resources they had, although they themselves are negatively impacted by the severe drought.

UN agencies and partner organisations on 22 March launched the [Inter-Agency Emergency Refugee Response Plan for the Influx of Refugees in the Somali Region of Ethiopia](#). The plan requires USD 116 million to provide comprehensive and coordinated humanitarian assistance for 100,000 newly arrived refugees.

UNHCR partner Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (GCECP) continues to conduct protection assessments targeting Laascaanood IDPs in different locations in Somalia including Telex and Kalabaydh where some 390 protection cases have so far been identified. The identified individuals will be provided with individual protection cash assistance. UNHCR and partners are conducting a joint assessment for the education response to support resource mobilization and implementation.



*The Government of Ethiopia, UNHCR and partners begin relocating Somali refugees who fled recent clashes in Laascaanood city to Mirqaan, the new settlement where refugees can go voluntarily. © UNHCR/Diana Diaz*

## COUNTRY UPDATES

**ETHIOPIA:** Ethiopia is the third largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, sheltering over 890,309 refugees by the end of March 2023, mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan.

Conflict, drought, inflation, and high food prices have had a cumulative devastating humanitarian impact across the country, driving millions into displacement. Notwithstanding its internal challenges, Ethiopia has kept its doors open for refugees and asylum seekers and is providing protection and services to those in need. The country is also creating conditions for self-reliance and inclusion of refugees in national development plans and services, such as health and education. UNHCR is working with government partners, development actors, international financial institutions, donor countries, the private sector and others to engage in long-term socio-economic investments in refugee-hosting areas, benefitting both refugees and the communities hosting them.

In March, UNHCR and the government's Refugee and Returnees Service (RRS) met to discuss and review the RRS draft policy documents on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). Once finalized, they will provide the legal and ethical framework for the RRS staff to prevent and mitigate SEA risks and respond to sexual misconduct, in line with UNHCR's policy on response to sexual misconduct based on a Victim-Centered Approach. UNHCR has been supporting the RRS in building its PSEA capacity to assume the leadership role in PSEA in the refugee operation across the country.

In January, RRS started issuing work permits to 650 Somali refugees in Awbarre and Kebribeyah camps in the Jigjiga area, in the Somali region, granting them the right to work and helping them to become self-reliant. The recipients, who are heads of 358 vulnerable families in Kebribeyah and 292 others in Awbarre, expressed their happiness and requested that the same opportunity be extended to the rest of the refugees in the region. They will be part of a project funded by the ILO and aimed at helping vulnerable families to become self-reliant.

UNHCR, RRS, the Petroleum and Energy Authority (PEA) and the Somali Region's Bureau of Finance (BoF) on 14 February launched the installation of a solar mini-grid in Shedder refugee camp to generate small-scale electricity for the benefit of refugees and host communities. Upon its finalization by the end of the year, the 254KWp off-grid system is expected to provide clean and reliable electricity to more than 12,000 refugees and members of the communities hosting them. This is in line with the government's commitment at the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2019 to provide refugees and host communities with the access to clean, reliable and affordable energy. The installation is undertaken by Humanitarian Energy PLC (HumEn), which, with the support from Mercy Corps Ethiopia, has become the first agency to secure a license to install a solar mini-grid in a refugee camp in Ethiopia.

In the Nguenyiel refugee camp (Gambella), within the “Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings” project (ESDS) the German agency for internal cooperation’s (GIZ), in collaboration with UNHCR and RRS, installed a solar-powered ‘Energy Kiosk’ enabling a selected group of refugees and host community members to run small businesses. Beneficiaries will use the 100% solar-powered kiosk to buy beverages, charge their phones, cut their hair, or watch TV shows upon payment. The collected rental fees will be used to provide fuel saving stoves to the most vulnerable groups. ESDS is commissioned by the German Ministry for Development Cooperation (BMZ).

**KENYA:** As of 31 March 2023, Kenya was host to 592,072 registered refugees and asylum-seekers including 240,984 in Dadaab and 257,761 in Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Settlement. The number of arrivals increased, with an estimated 300 to 400 persons arriving in Dadaab daily. As of end March, the total number of new arrivals profiled was 130,036 individuals / 29,946 households. Major reasons for flight were reported as drought/famine (72%), insecurity (27%) and lack of basic services (1%). Most refugees and asylum-seekers are from Somalia and South Sudan, with smaller populations from DR Congo, Ethiopia, Burundi, Sudan, Uganda, Eritrea, and Rwanda.

Kakuma and Kalobeyei reception centres continue to receive high numbers of new arrivals. A significant number are onward movers from Uganda and Tanzania. Most secondary movers indicated ‘lack of basic services’ such as access to education as some of the reasons for flight.

The [Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan in Turkana West \(KISED P\) Phase II \(2023-27\)](#) was officially launched in Nairobi on 7 March by the Governor of Turkana County Government, along with the Principal Secretary of the State Department for Immigration and Citizen Services and UNHCR’s Representative. The County Government, UNHCR and partners embarked on a 15-year comprehensive multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder initiative, also known as Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Programme (KISED P) in Turkana West. KISED P uses an area-based approach and will directly and indirectly benefit the Turkana West population which is comprised of approximately 186,000 refugees and 320,000 host population. The implementation of KISED P is co-led by the County Government, and UNHCR, in close collaboration with all partners and with an initial financial support of the European Union complementing other multilateral and bilateral assistance in Turkana West. It follows a three-phase approach with a preparatory stage in 2016-2017 followed by Phase I (2018-2022), Phase II (2023-2027) and Phase III (2028-2030).

Kenya opened Junior Secondary Schools for the first time in January 2023, including in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and Kalobeyei settlement. This represents a key achievement in the progressive transition to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). 2,500 refugee and host community learners joined public secondary schools on scholarship as part of a partnership between the World Bank, Global Partnership for Education and the Ministry of Education. Enrolment and attendance continue to be affected by the Horn of Africa drought.

**RWANDA:** Rwanda hosted about 126,429 refugees and asylum-seekers at the end of March 2023. The population of concern includes mainly persons from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (60%) and Burundi (40%). About 91% of refugees in Rwanda are hosted in refugee camps.

As of the end of March 2023, a total of 5,876 Congolese asylum seekers have fled to Rwanda’s western province due to fighting in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); 1,775 of these individuals were transferred to Mahama refugee camp, while 4,101 were hosted in Nkamira site. UNHCR continues to work with the Government of Rwanda and partners to provide food and non-food related items to all new asylum seekers and coordinate the emergency response. UNHCR also continues to identify gaps in the response and advocate for more resources or contributions to meet the needs of the new arrivals.

Between the end of November and beginning of January, new arrivals were initially received at Kijote Transit Centre before being transferred to Mahama refugee camp. Due to the increasing numbers, however, and the fact that Mahama Camp had reached capacity, on 12 January, the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) informed UNHCR of the decision of the Government of Rwanda to host asylum seekers close to the border at a new site - Nkamira. On 8 February, Kijote Transit Centre was emptied, and all new arrivals are now directly transferred to Nkamira site. As of March 2023, UNHCR and partners continue to build the capacity of the site to accommodate the new flow of arrivals. WFP in cooperation with Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) provided nutritious morning porridge as well as hot meals to all asylum seekers at the Nkamira site and Mahama refugee camp. Fresh vegetables were also being added to the hot meals.

Additionally, UNHCR, through the respective health partners in refugee camps enrolled 1,604 and 1,117 pregnant and lactating women respectively in the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program to support with balanced macronutrient intake for healthier pregnancy and optimal perinatal outcomes. 1,173 HIV/AIDS patients also continued to be supported with nutritional feeding programmes.

UNHCR, World Vision International and UNICEF are putting in place educational bridging programmes to support school going age children and youth to transition to the national education system. Read more [here](#).

**SUDAN:** Sudan hosts one of the largest refugee populations in Africa and by the end of March 2023 hosted over 1.14 million refugees. South Sudanese refugees make up the majority of the population, while others have fled violence and persecution in neighbouring countries, including Eritrea, Ethiopia and Chad. Wars in Syria and Yemen also pushed people to seek safety in the

country. Most refugees (61%) live in out-of-camp settlements, host communities and urban areas, while others (39%) stay in 24 camps and many more settlements.

The country also has 3.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), mostly in the Darfur region that has suffered from a volatile security situation for almost two decades. Regular episodes of armed violence keep driving people to flee their homes. Together with the Sudanese Government, UNHCR provides protection and delivery of multisectoral assistance to displaced people in need.

Sudan's current operational environment remains highly complex with a volatile outlook given the ongoing political impasse, deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, ongoing inter-communal conflicts in Darfur as well as precarious security situations in many parts of the country. The situation remains volatile in other regions, such as Kordofan and Blue Nile States, where intercommunal conflict, civil unrest and criminal activities occasionally disrupt the operations of the humanitarian organizations.

In addition to such complexity, the regional dynamics also contribute significantly as there are constantly evolving scenarios in the neighbouring countries, such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR), and Chad, presenting various challenges to Sudan's asylum capacities.

Renewed conflict in Upper Nile State, South Sudan, has caused over 9,800 South Sudanese refugees to flee to Sudan since 1 December, seeking protection and assistance. This includes over 6,500 individuals in White Nile, and nearly 3,300 individuals in the eastern corridor of South Kordofan.

UNHCR, in collaboration with the government of Sudan and partners have been responding to the urgent needs of the new arrivals providing them with assistance including food, water, shelter, health care and core relief items.

**SOUTH SUDAN:** South Sudan hosted a total of 311,000 refugees and asylum-seekers by the end of March 2023, mainly from Sudan and the DRC and has over 2.2 million IDPs. Additionally, about 2.3 million South Sudanese are refugees in the neighbouring countries of Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt and CAR.

In South Sudan, there are concerns with the slow security sector, constitutional and electoral reform, and transitional justice and the continued sub-national violence. South Sudan will have its first ever national election in December 2024, after more than a decade of independence. Across the asylum countries, the long-term economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ripple effects of the war in Ukraine include increased unemployment, poverty, inflation, rising fuel and food commodities prices and fertilizer shortages. The accelerating climate crisis combining drought and floods impacting South Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya affects the economic situation and has also induced displacement. These multiple challenges have contributed to the pendular movements of South Sudanese between countries of origin and asylum in the past year.

The new Special Envoy for Sudan's Solution Initiative and UNHCR's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa conducted a mission to South Sudan from 20 to 21 March. IGAD's Head of Mission to South Sudan also participated in the mission. During their visit, members of the delegation met key government stakeholders including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, the Commission for Refugees Affairs (CRA), and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission to revamp the operationalization of the Solution Initiative in South Sudan. UNHCR Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa also held bilateral consultations with UNDP and IOM to advocate for a strong linkage between regional solution approaches and national-level operational response.

IGAD organized a three-day National Dialogue on Forced Displacement and Solutions in Juba. The workshop brought together IGAD, UNHCR, representatives of various ministries, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, CRA, parliamentarians as well as refugees and IDPs. Part of the agenda was to kickstart the discussion on South Sudan's progress towards its Global Refugee Forum (GRF) pledges ahead of the regional IGAD stock-taking meeting in Djibouti on 5 and 6 April.

**TANZANIA:** By 31 March 2023, Tanzania hosted 249,383 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and most reside in the Nduta and Nyarugusu refugee camps in the country's Kigoma region.

In 2023, an alarming resurgence of violence in the eastern DRC generated by armed groups resulting in the killing of civilians triggered forced displacements of thousands of people who sought asylum in neighbouring countries including in Tanzania. As a result, 6,935 Congolese have been received by the Kigoma regional authorities between January and March 2023. A total of 4,271 asylum seekers were transferred to Nyarugusu camp and 2,801 have been registered. Out of the registered population 60% are children under 17 years, 56% are women and 40% are men.

In last two weeks of March, there was a sudden surge in the number of asylum seekers from the DRC arriving in Tanzania from Masisi and Rutshuru territories in North Kivu. Said locations are currently occupied by various non-state armed groups. Civilians are now caught between these groups and recent peace agreements are yet to materialize. Initial interviews with recent asylum seekers regarding the reasons for their flight have included: fear of being targeted by all armed groups; fear of forced recruitment of young men, and generalized violence.

UNHCR and partners continue to work to respond to this crisis but need support. UNHCR is appealing for funding in line with the [Regional Refugee Response Plan for the DRC situation](#).

UNHCR in collaboration with Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) has engaged partners to respond to this emergency in sectors of Protection, health, shelter, WASH, and food.

Asylum seekers' first point of contact remains the Ministry of Home Affairs office in Kigoma. They are later transported to the five transit centers where they are pre-screened by the Refugee Service Department and transferred to Nyarugusu camp once pre-screened. UNHCR has organized community leadership structures in all centres among asylum seekers. These leadership structures act as a liaison between UNHCR, partners and asylum seekers, and as a channel to send messages including on registration procedures and hygiene promotion, or on concerns from asylum seekers.

While assistance continues, jointly with the government of Tanzania, UNHCR developed a contingency plan to prepare and respond to this new influx of asylum seekers from the DRC in a coordinated manner should numbers continue to increase.

**UGANDA:** By the end of March 2023, the registered refugee and asylum-seeker population stood at over 1.53 million.

Uganda continues to receive new arrivals from the DRC and South Sudan, through its southwestern and northern borders. Cumulatively, 19,043 individuals have arrived in the country since the beginning of 2023. Of these, 62 per cent have arrived from South Sudan while 38 per cent are from the DRC. Most of the new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) came through Nyakabande (Kisoro district) and Sebagoro (Kikuube district) Transit Centre. They are mainly from Masisi and Bwisha areas, fleeing widespread civil unrest and conflict. The new arrivals from South Sudan are mainly coming in through Lokung Collection Point (Lamwo district), Ocea Reception Centre (Terego/Madi-Okollo districts) and Kuluba Transit Centre (Koboko district). Most of them are from Jonglei, Unity, and Eastern Equatoria states, fleeing armed conflict, intertribal clashes, famine, as well as seeking family reunification and access to better social services. Lokung collection point in Lamwo district is overstretched by over 200 per cent and Nyakabande transit centre in Kisoro district is overstretched by 30 per cent.

On 28 February, the Government of Uganda, through the Office of the Prime Minister, and UNHCR, launched the Uganda roadmap towards the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) under the theme "*Uganda, The World's Model for the Refugee Response - Let's Make It Sustainable*". Uganda will be a co-convenor at the second Global Refugee Forum which will take place in the second week of December 2023. Uganda's preparation for the GRF is centered around five priority areas, including increasing resilience and self-reliance for refugees, taking action against climate change, sharing responsibility rather than shifting duty, localizing the refugee response by strengthening the role of national responders, and building lasting achievable and impactful solutions for refugees. Read more [here](#).

In March, the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner (Operations) and the European Commissioner Deputy Director-General for the Directorate-General International Partnerships (DG INTPA) visited Uganda together to meet with government representatives in Kampala and with refugees in Nakivale Refugee settlement. During the visit, the representatives of the two organizations reaffirmed their appreciation for the Uganda Government's open-door policy and leadership in promoting refugee inclusion. Furthermore, the EU announced a new contribution of EUR 15 million to support the integration of refugees in public sector systems. Uganda continues to receive refugees from DRC and South Sudan due to ongoing conflicts, despite being affected by the impact of climate change. The UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner (Operations) appealed for international solidarity to ensure the wellbeing and dignity of refugees and their hosting communities. Find more in the Press Release [here](#).

The Government of Uganda endorsed the Education Response Plan II. The ERP II aims to ensure that 690,540 children, adolescents, and youth from the refugee and host communities, have access to sustained quality and inclusive learning opportunities.

In March Education Cannot Wait (ECW) announced US\$25 million in catalytic funding to expand the Fund's Multi-Year Resilience Programme. The extended three-year programme will be delivered by Save the Children and UNHCR, in partnership with the Government of Uganda, and will support the inclusion in the national education system of more than 122,000 refugees.



Raouf Mazou, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner Operations & Myriam Ferran INTPA DDC in a group focus discussion with health workers at Rubondo health center III in Nakivale refugee settlement. © UNHCR/Esther Ruth Mbabazi

## REGIONAL UPDATES

### Regional External Engagement updates:

Between 6 and 10 March, UNHCR's EHAGL Bureau Regional Director provided the regional update at the 86th Meeting of UNHCR's Standing Committee. On the margins of the event, the Regional Director hosted a Side Event on Climate and Displacement.

### Updates from the Office of Special Envoy (SE) for the Horn of Africa:

The Sudan-South Sudan Solutions Initiative (SI) for refugees, IDPs, returnees and vulnerable host communities has been at the center of the UNHCR Special Envoy's (SE) high level political advocacy in this reporting period. The SE had various high-level political engagements with the governments of Sudan and South Sudan to advance the momentum on implementation of the national solutions strategies of the two countries.

In Sudan, the SE had productive discussions on the way forward of the SI with senior government officials including the President of the Transitional Sovereignty Council (Chair of IGAD) and the Special Envoy of the Government of Sudan to the IGAD Solutions Initiative who was appointed in January 2023. A joint road map was agreed on to accelerate the implementation of the national strategies of Sudan and South Sudan on solutions. A road map that leads to the IGAD Heads of State Summit on SI for Sudan and South Sudan was also jointly developed and endorsed with IGAD's Executive Secretary in Djibouti. Furthermore, the UNHCR SE conducted a mission to Juba led by the Sudan Special Envoy (IGAD Chair). The Government of South Sudan remains committed to the SI and they are in the process of appointing a SE for South Sudan.

In all the engagements, the political buy-in of the governments was strongly demonstrated and the need for financial resources as well as technical support was highlighted. Moreover, strong commitment to popularize the national strategies at the national level as well with the host countries, the UN country teams, and development partners was deemed necessary. UNHCR's solidarity as well as the High Commissioner's commitment to support the governments of Sudan and South Sudan in realizing solutions for the displaced people was reiterated by the UNHCR SE.

In the reporting period, the SE Office supported UNHCR's Private Sector Partnerships Africa service in their fundraising and campaign efforts during the month of Ramadan. A Ramadan Iftar and campaign was organized in collaboration with Kenyan Muslim Business and Community Leaders. Over 50 people attended the event raising over 10 million Kenyan Shillings in cash donations and pledges (*for more on the campaign please visit - [Every Gift Counts this Ramadan](#)*).

### Development Partnerships

In the lead-up to the 2023 **Global Refugee Forum**, over 20 UN entities have come together to co-create the UN common pledge 2.0, a successor to the UN Common Pledge at the 2019 GRF. The UN Country Team (UNCT) from Uganda was represented in the UN Common Pledge 2.0 Innovation Lab that was co-convened by UNHCR, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the United Nations Development Coordination Office (UNDCO) in Geneva from 30-31 January 2023. The Innovation Lab provided the opportunity to collectively develop the scope and shape of the UN common pledge 2.0 and to discuss possible commitments under the pledge. The UN common pledge 2.0 which will be announced at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, commits the UN family to systematically promote and support refugees' inclusion in UN response plans and in national systems.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and German Development Agency's (**BMZ and GIZ**) provided additional support to the Regional Water Sanitation and Hygiene (R-WASH) projects in Eastern Africa. In February, BMZ announced an additional €40 million for the R-WASH program. The R-WASH projects, designed by UNHCR and UNICEF in cooperation with KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) Development Bank, include water and sanitation infrastructure investments for host communities, refugees and internally displaced persons; and are linked to two GRF pledges made by Germany. The first 3-year phase amounted to €32 million to build and expand water supply systems and sanitation facilities in three to four locations in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia. The R-WASH program is replacing water trucking and NGO-delivered drinking water through an integrated, sustainable water supply system and at the same time save costs for humanitarian support. About 500,000 people from the host communities and refugees will benefit from the R-WASH program.

On 27 March, the **World Bank** approved a second additional financing \$70 Million for the South Sudan COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness project, with \$20 Million component for the Window for Refugees and Host Communities (WHR). In 2022, South Sudan received \$200 Million (\$50 WHR component) in additional financing to support South Sudan's continued efforts to improve its capacity to respond to COVID-19. This International Development Association (IDA) grant will also help strengthen health service delivery for the general population and expand service provision to vulnerable groups in Upper Nile State, Jonglei State, Greater Pibor Administrative Area, and Ruweng Administrative Area.

**EU International Partnerships (INTPA) Regional allocation for Sudan-South Sudan Solutions Initiative:** In line with the Global Compact of Refugees (GCR) and the Secretary-General's Action Agenda, the Solutions Initiative for Sudan and South Sudan aims to unlock durable solutions for Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees and internally displaced persons. The European Union is supporting the Solutions Initiative through INTPA for the implementation of key activities in Ethiopia, Kenya South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. The fund was activated in January 2023 and will support proposed activities until December 2024. The project is implemented through UNHCR's EHAGL Regional Bureau and UNHCR Country Operations and seeks to achieve 4 outcomes: (i) enabling young people affected by displacement become peacebuilders, (ii) collect relevant and quality data and evidence inform solutions programming; (iii) advance the solutions framework in Sudan and South Sudan through access to nationality documentation for refugees of South Sudanese origin in Sudan, and (iv) scaled-up development support for sustainable reintegration and peaceful co-existence among Sudanese refugee returnees, refugees, and local communities in Sudan.

**African Development Bank (AfDB) funded Regional Program on Investment Climate:** UNHCR, in partnership with the East African Community (EAC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), continue to implement a regional program funded by AfDB on Enhancing the Investment Climate for the Economic Empowerment of Refugee, Returnee and Host/Return Community Women (Phase 1). The program aims to address the legal, regulatory, procedural, and infrastructural barriers to the economic empowerment of refugee, returnee and host/return communities and identify sectors of competitive advantage for investment and trade in refugee-hosting and return areas; initially targeting 7 countries that are members of EAC and IGAD. In 2022, implementation of the regional program began with a series of scoping missions to explore investment and trade opportunities and challenges for private sector investments in refugee-hosting areas for the economic empowerment of refugees and host communities. Four scoping missions to Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan were undertaken in 2022. In February 2023, two scoping missions to Djibouti and Uganda were undertaken.

The first quarter of 2023 kickstarted a first of a series of Public-Private Dialogues in Ethiopia (January 2023). The public-private dialogues aim to convene public and private sector stakeholders to discuss the role of the private sector in creating sustainable job and income generation opportunities for displaced people and host communities. The Ethiopia Public-Private Dialogue found positive support for social cohesion between refugee and host communities in the Somali region and prospects for private sector investment in this area. Upcoming Public-Private Dialogues, following the conclusion of country scoping missions, are planned in Burundi, Kenya, and Ethiopia in the next quarter.

Another component of the project is a capacity building which consists of peer-to-peer learning exchange events between the IGAD and EAC Secretariats. The first peer-to-peer exchange is slated for May 2023 with the goal of facilitating knowledge exchange and experiences on investment climate in refugee-hosting areas, sharing updates forced displacement trends and facilitating discussions on forced displacement as development challenge in the sub-region. The exchange is informed by capacity gap assessments of the two Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) following visits to EAC offices in Arusha, Tanzania (January 2023) and to IGAD offices in Djibouti (February 2023).

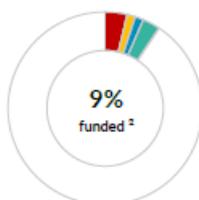
## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the **East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region**, as well as to those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

Total contributions to **the region, inclusive of COVID-19 contributions** amount to **USD 250 million** as of 5 April 2023.



**\$ 2.063 billion**  
 UNHCR's financial requirements 2023 <sup>1</sup>



FUNDING UPDATE | 2023

**EAST HORN AND  
 GREAT LAKES**  
 as of 28 March 2023



CONTRIBUTIONS <sup>3</sup> | USD

	■	■	■	■	
	Unearmarked	Softly earmarked	Earmarked	Tightly earmarked	Total
European Union	-	-	-	22,283,752	22,283,752
Denmark	-	17,162,997	-	909,092	18,072,089
Japan	-	-	13,139,923	4,599,999	17,739,922
Netherlands	-	-	943,506	9,047,299	9,990,805
Canada	-	2,747,253	4,474,097	522,286	7,743,636
Germany	-	5,724,017	-	1,382,759	7,106,776
Sweden	-	-	4,801,229	-	4,801,229
Switzerland	-	-	4,721,931	58,266	4,780,197
CERF	-	-	-	4,430,003	4,430,003
World Diabetes Foundation	-	-	-	3,228,830	3,228,830
IKEA Foundation	-	-	-	3,084,038	3,084,038
United Kingdom	-	-	-	2,691,391	2,691,391
Republic of Korea	-	-	50,016	2,000,000	2,050,016
UN Peacebuilding Fund	-	-	-	1,411,919	1,411,919
Belgium	-	-	-	1,209,119	1,209,119
African Development Bank Group	-	-	-	1,033,019	1,033,019
UN Programme On HIV/AIDS	-	31,850	-	667,498	699,348
UN Children Fund	-	-	-	631,429	631,429
IGAD	-	-	175,689	349,791	525,480
United Nations Foundation	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
Education Cannot Wait	-	-	30,516	469,484	500,000
World Food Programme	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
Luxembourg	-	-	466,200	-	466,200
The Big Heart Foundation	-	-	-	399,055	399,055
Profuturo	-	-	-	350,141	350,141
Private donors Germany	-	106,566	-	198,000	304,566
Coop Italia	-	-	-	277,308	277,308
Stiftung Auxilium	-	-	-	255,632	255,632
Austria	-	-	-	248,153	248,153
Morneau Shepell (Lifeworks Ltd)	-	-	-	223,033	223,033
Norway	-	-	-	211,215	211,215
Shih Wing Ching Foundation	-	192,037	-	-	192,037
Solvatten	-	-	-	185,679	185,679
Augustinus Fonden	-	-	-	144,760	144,760
Private donors Republic of Korea	-	119,810	20,390	927	141,126
Coca-Cola Foundation	-	-	-	113,152	113,152
MasterCard International Incorporated	-	-	-	106,211	106,211
Monaco	-	-	103,413	-	103,413
Private donors Sweden	-	101,558	-	-	101,558
Other private donors	-	235,016	10,322	110,269	355,607

UNHCR Division of External Relations

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Sub-total	-	26,421,103	28,937,232	63,833,509	119,191,844
Indicative allocation of funds and adjustments	60,400,140	2,295,041	(27,658)	11,580,570	74,248,094
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,400,140</b>	<b>28,716,144</b>	<b>28,909,574</b>	<b>75,414,080</b>	<b>193,439,938</b>

Methodology: Unearmarked funding is allocated and reallocated multiple times during the year to allow UNHCR to fund prioritised activities. This funding update includes an indicative allocation of funds so as to accurately represent the resources available for the sub-region. The contributions earmarked for East Horn and Great Lakes shown above are combined with an indicative allocation of the softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions listed below. This allocation respects different levels of earmarking. Adjustments relate to programme support costs and carry-over.

#### ■ OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS <sup>4</sup> | USD

Private donors: Luxembourg 5.1 million | Canada 3.9 million

#### ■ UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS <sup>5</sup> | USD

Sweden 69 million | Norway 63.1 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Netherlands 34.1 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

Algeria | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

#### Notes:

1. The financial requirements for East Horn and Great Lakes are for the operations in Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania.
2. The percentage funded (9%) and total funding amount (\$193,439,938) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$1,869,499,916 representing 91% of the financial requirements.
3. Contributions to East Horn and Great Lakes are shown by the earmarking modality as defined in the Grand Bargain.
4. Due to their earmarking at the region, or to a related situation or theme, the other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used in East Horn and Great Lakes. Where a donor has contributed \$2 million or more, the total amount of the contributions is shown.
5. Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Where a donor has contributed \$10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

For more information: <http://reporting.unhcr.org>

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