OVERVIEW

In March, armed conflict and insecurity made the operational environment in Somalia challenging. In Laasacaanood, armed conflict restarted in late March as a result of an increase in tension and the lack of substantive peace negotiations. The conflict between Al-Shabab, hereafter referred to as the non-state armed group (NSAG), and the alliance of Somali security forces, local militias, and international security partners continued sporadically, with the NSAG carrying out retaliatory attacks. Additionally, climate emergency continued, with heavy rains and flood affecting lives and livelihoods of Somalis across the country. In March, 299,000 internal displacements were recorded, primarily because of flood, drought, and conflict.

Finding durable solutions for refugees and asylum seekers, refugee returnees, and internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in collaboration with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), Federal Member States (FMS), and development and humanitarian partners remains one of UNHCR's top priorities in Somalia. Moreover, UNHCR in collaboration with authorities and partners, continued to provide vital protection assistance to vulnerable IDPs and host communities affected by conflict and drought. In Somalia, UNHCR leads/co-leads the Protection, Shelter, and CCCM clusters for the IDP response.

UNHCR's key achievements for the month of March are listed below:

- More than 16,000 drought-affected displaced individuals and host community members in Baidoa, Bossaso, Dhobley, Galkayo, Gardo, Garowe, and Kismayo received various types of cash support, including multipurpose cash assistance, cash for shelter/NFI, cash for dignity kits, and protection cash assistance for persons with specific needs.
- The IDP profiling exercise conducted in Beletweyne concluded on 28 March. The exercise supported the biometric enrolment in UNHCR proGres v4 of all IDPs age 5 and above, resulting in the enrolment of 3,471 HHs (10,620 individuals).
- With the aim of improving the protection environment of refugees and asylum seekers, in Hargeisa and Wajaale near the Ethiopian border, 123 participants from the police, immigration detention centers, and immigration/border units received training on refugee law and international protection.

KEY FIGURES

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<tr>
<th>PERSONS OF CONCERN</th>
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<td>(Jan 2020 - Mar 2023)</td>
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FUNDING

Funding required for 2023 (as of 5 April)

174.2M

10% funded
Refugees and asylum seekers as of March 2023

Refugee returnees from January 2020, as of March 2023

Internal displacements from January 2022 as of February 2023

2,639,071 Refugees and Asylum Seekers
35,381 Refugees and Asylum Seekers
7,382 Refugees and Asylum Seekers
UNHCR in Somalia continued to operate in a highly complex environment. Political tension continued in Laascanood, resulting in armed conflict between the Somaliland security forces and the armed members led by the Dhulbahante clan, resulting in an unknown number of casualties and the displacement of at least 163,000 individuals within Somalia. Access to IDP sites and Laascanood remained difficult due to conflict and insecurity. Furthermore, the sporadic armed conflict and reprisal attacks between the NSAG and the coalition of Somali security forces, local militias, and international security partners continued in Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, and South-West states.

According to the UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN), 299,000 displacements within Somalia were recorded in March, a 25% rise from February. Out of the total displacements during the reporting month, 44% were attributed to floods, 34% to the drought, 19% to conflict/insecurity, and 3% to other reasons. The top humanitarian needs of the displaced families were shelter (46%), followed by food (39%), and livelihood (8%). The top three regions that received the greatest number of new displacements in March were Gedo, followed by Bay and Bari. More up-to-date information about displacement and the protection needs of the IDPs can be found at the new PRMN online interactive dashboard: http://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/.

The country started to receive moderate rains in the week starting 12 March, with the heaviest rainfall recorded in the Gedo and Bay regions. The rains coincided with disease outbreaks, including acute watery diarrhea and measles in several parts of the country, and there may be little respite due to the risk of people consuming contaminated water and the lack of adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities and services.\(^1\) By the end of the month, an estimated 100,000 people were already affected by the heavy rains and flash flooding in several areas, including Baardheere (Jubaland) and Jowhar (Hirshabelle) districts, Dhuusamarreeb and Adado towns (Galmudug), Togdheer and Awdal regions (Somaliland), Jalaam town (Puntland), Baidoa (South-West State), and Banadir. The heavy rains and flooding have come following five seasons of drought that has displaced millions of Somalis and killed 3.8 million livestock since mid-2021. Although the rains provided some relief from the drought, the current outlook suggests a 50% chance of below-average rainfall this season. Moreover, the warmer than average surface temperatures across the country indicate that drought effects are far from over.\(^2\)

With the unanimous approval of the draft Refugee Act by the Council of Ministers of the FGS before it was sent to the Federal Parliament for further discussion, there have been positive steps taken in the creation of a favorable protection environment for refugees and asylum seekers. In Somaliland, the Refugees and Asylum Seekers Act was passed by the lower house; it was signed into law on 18 March and is scheduled to take effect on 19 April 2023.

Somalia hosts some 35,338 refugees and asylum-seekers, of which 70% are women and children; 31% are school-age children (6-17 years); and 26% are women and girls of reproductive age (13-49 years). The majority of refugees and asylum-seekers (67%) are from Ethiopia, followed by Yemen (29%), and Syria (4%). Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers reside in urban or peri-urban settings across the Woqooyi Galbeed and Bari regions, in the northern part of the country. Furthermore, since January 2020, 7,382 former refugees have returned to Somalia from their countries of asylum, mostly from Yemen, followed by Kenya. From the total number of refugee returnees, 2,221 individuals have been assisted by UNHCR through the Voluntary Repatriation Programme from Kenya and the Assisted Spontaneous Returns (ASR) Programme from Yemen.

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Somalia: Gu rainy season 2023 Flash Floods Update No. 1 (23 March 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
Somalia: Gu rainy season 2023 Flash Floods Update No. 2 (3 April 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb

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\(^1\) Somalia: Gu rainy season 2023 Flash Floods Update No. 1 (23 March 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
\(^2\) Somalia: Gu rainy season 2023 Flash Floods Update No. 2 (3 April 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
Update on Achievements

Protection

Prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV)
- UNHCR, through its partner, identified and/or supported 59 new and existing GBV cases in March. Services to the survivors included safe house support, psychosocial counselling, medical and legal referrals, and provision of dignity kits, among others.
- UNHCR, through its partner, conducted weekly outreach to raise awareness about GBV risk factors, existing services, and referral services in 17 IDP settlements in Abudwaq, Guriel, Adado, Dhusamareeb, and South Galkayo in Galmudug State, reaching 1,600 individuals. During the outreach, community members were encouraged to report GBV cases on time and seek available services.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through the help desks operated by its partner, Women's Action Advocacy Progress Organization (WAAPO), supported 198 IDPs with various GBV services, including information on services available to GBV survivors, referral services, psychosocial counselling, and emergency GBV cash support.
- On March 8, UNHCR and partners commemorated International Women’s Day, under the theme “DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality”. Some of the activities conducted on the day were as follows:
  - In Baidoa and Dollow, UNHCR and partners organized events to acknowledge women’s achievements and leadership in the fields of innovation and technology and to discuss ways to improve gender equality. In Baidoa alone, there were 156 participants who attended the event.
  - In Bossaso and Galkayo, UNHCR, in collaboration with Puntland’s Ministry of Women Development and Family Affairs (MoWDAFA), brought together 700 participants from different sections of society to reflect on improving access to technology to bring more financial independence to women through opportunities such as online business.
  - In Dhusamareeb, Galmudug State, UNHCR, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development (MoWHRD) and other protection partners organized an event that was attended by over 80 high-level representatives from state government, women’s groups, academia, and youth groups. The speakers discussed the use of technology to further education and training for women and girls.

Child Protection
- UNHCR’s partner facilitated the reunification of twenty unaccompanied and separated children affected by the conflict in Laascaanood with their guardians.

Community engagement and awareness raising
- To raise public awareness about the dangers of irregular migration, or tahriib, UNHCR and its partners conducted a series of small and large-scale community awareness campaigns, including focus group discussions, public testimonials, and peer-to-peer dialogue sessions, reaching more than 20,000 individuals, primarily youth and migrants within the IDP, refugee, asylum seeker, and hosting communities. Besides awareness-raising activities, UNHCR’s partner identified protection risks and referred 17 cases of vulnerable migrants to various service providers within Puntland.
- To counter misinformation about the resettlement programme circulated in social media, UNHCR’s partner worked with local media to broadcast messages in social media to counter the false narrative. According to a social media analytical report, the messages were re-shared 63 times and were viewed more than 18,000 times by people in Puntland, Somaliland, and South-Central Somalia.
UNHCR, through its partner, conducted a day-long community awareness event at the University of Hargeisa on access to the national justice system, particularly for GBV survivors, to educate the displaced population and host community on their legal rights and obligations to promote human rights and peaceful coexistence and social cohesion. The forum was also used to understand the legal issues and challenges that refugees and host communities face. There were 75 participants, consisting of refugees, returnees, IDPs, asylum seekers, and traditional and religious leaders from the host community.

At the Peaceful Coexistence Center (PCC) in Hargeisa, 414 individuals received counselling and case referral support. The majority of the advice sought was for financial insecurity, followed by concerns about refugee status determination (RSD) and subsistence allowance. Where appropriate, cases were referred to relevant partners for further assistance.

In Hargeisa, UNHCR, through its partner, supported 221 refugees and asylum seekers (100 females and 30 males) with psychosocial counselling through the help desk, community outreach initiatives, and helpline.

Registration, reception, and reintegration support

In the port of Bossaso, Puntland, UNHCR and partners received 40 individuals arriving from Yemen, including 9 Yemeni refugees and 31 Somali refugee returnees, who were accommodated at the UNHCR-managed Reception Center for registration and food support, among other services. Similarly, in Berbera, Somaliland, UNHCR and partners received four commercial boats from Yemen carrying 35 refugees and asylum seekers and 17 Somali refugee returnees, who were all transferred to a UNHCR-managed Reception Center for registration, food, accommodation, health screening, and counselling support.

In Berbera, UNHCR distributed subsistence allowance for 26 Somali refugee returnee HHs (50 individuals) from Yemen, covering a period of two months. Likewise, in South Central, 50 Somali refugee returnees received a reinstatement grant. Each returnee receives a reinstatement grant of USD 200, and returnee households are also eligible for subsistence allowances for up to six months to help them reintegrate back into their communities.

Legal assistance

In Somaliland and Puntland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided legal assistance to 468 individuals, mainly refugees, asylum seekers, a handful of IDPs and the host community. Services included legal counselling, mediation, police reporting, intervention with relevant authorities to secure the release of refugees and asylum seekers from police custody, court-related services including legal representation, birth certificate and national ID issuance, provision of emergency shelter, and referral to other service providers.

UNHCR, through its partner, identified and resolved 87 housing, land, and property (HLP) disputes across IDP sites in Baidoa, including disputes over land encroachment and disputes on land ownership between spouses.

Refugee Status Determination (RSD)

In March, UNHCR conducted 30 RSD interviews for 114 individuals, submitted nine RSD assessments for 25 individuals, and reviewed and/or finalized 31 cases consisting of 106 individuals.

Health

UNHCR’s partners delivered primary and secondary health care services to 3,138 individuals. Services included consultations and medical screening, laboratory investigations, medical treatments, and referrals to specialized hospitals. The health services primarily benefited refugees and asylum seekers across the country, although some IDPs and host community members also received health support in Mogadishu.
Education

- In Puntland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided mentoring support to 347 refugee and asylum seeker children who will soon appear in centralized exams for different grades. The support is expected to improve the academic performance of a number of high school students, helping them secure scholarships at local universities for higher education.
- In Mogadishu, UNHCR provided school meal support to 837 refugee and asylum seeker children. The students received cash for meal support, which acted as an incentive to improve school attendance.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, verified the attendance of 416 refugee and asylum seeker children in 19 different schools, out of which 45% were female pupils.
- In Garowe, UNHCR supported 100 refugee and asylum seeker children to attend catch-up classes to improve their Somali and English language skills.

Drought Response

- The IDP profiling exercise conducted in Beletweyne by UNHCR and its partner concluded on 28 March. The exercise supported the biometric enrolment in UNHCR proGres v4 of all IDPs age 5 and above within the implementation area. The joint effort resulted in the enrolment of 3,471 HHs (10,620 individuals), significantly exceeding the initial target of 2,500 IDP HHs.
- Through the established Protection Helpdesks across IDP sites in Widh-Widh, Yagoori, Erigavo, Kalabaydh, and Buuhoodle of Sool, Sanaag, and Togdheer regions in Somaliland, UNHCR provided psychosocial support, counseling, and referral services. Paralegals and case workers who performed the protection response and referral services supported the help desks.
- In Burao, Togdheer region in Somaliland, UNHCR supported the establishment of Camp Management Committees (CMC) at eight IDP sites to improve self-governance by creating a primary interface between service providers and the wider camp population.
- In Baidoa, UNHCR distributed multipurpose cash assistance to cover the basic needs of 800 HHs (4,800 individuals) and cash in lieu of NFI for 243 HHs (1,458 individuals). Beneficiaries were selected from more than 8,000 vulnerability assessments conducted in Baidoa among drought-affected IDPs. Families received a one-time payment of USD 90 for multipurpose cash assistance and a one-time payment of USD 100 for monetized NFI assistance.
- In Dhobley, UNHCR distributed cash in lieu of NFI assistance for 200 HHs (1,671 individuals), with each family receiving USD 100.
- In Kismayo, based on the results of the vulnerable assessment, UNHCR distributed multi-purpose cash assistance to 600 HHs (3,600 individuals), with each family receiving USD 90 to cover basic needs and cash in lieu of NFI assistance to 200 HHs (1,200 individuals), with each family receiving USD 100.
- In Bossaso, UNHCR distributed cash in lieu of dignity kits to 1,000 women and girls from refugee, asylum seeker, IDP, and hosting communities, with each receiving USD 65. Likewise, cash assistance to support individuals with protection concerns and persons with specific needs was distributed to 600 individuals from the aforementioned communities, with each receiving USD 100.
- In Garowe and Gardo, UNHCR distributed cash in lieu of dignity kits and cash assistance to individuals with protection and persons with specific needs, assisting 550 and 350 vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, and host communities, respectively. The beneficiaries were selected through a combination of strategies, including vulnerable assessment and linkages with other GBV actors.
- In Galkayo, 1,000 women and girls from refugee, asylum seeker, IDP, and hosting communities received cash in lieu of dignity kits.
- In Dollow, UNHCR, through its partner, distributed dignity kits to 17 new arrivals from Ethiopia who were displaced because of the drought.
- UNHCR, through its partner, conducted a protection assessment of 180 HHs (1,080 individuals) in Beletweyne.
Across 13 IDP sites in Bossaso, UNHCR, through its partner, carried out the rehabilitation and desludging of 107 non-functional latrines and garbage collection campaigns to mitigate against the adverse effects of solid waste in the rainy season. These activities employed a cash-for-work model, benefiting 143 vulnerable HHs living in the sites.

Across 15 IDP sites in Galkayo and Abudwak, Galmudug State, UNHCR conducted site maintenance activities through the cash for work modality, benefiting 250 HHs. In addition, 58 latrines went through the desludging process at six IDP sites in South Galkayo.

In five IDP sites in Abudwak, UNHCR installed street solar lights to enhance the protection of vulnerable IDP, in particular women and girls, during afterhours.

**Shelter and NFI**

In response to the Laascaanood conflict, UNHCR, through its partner, has completed the registration of 1,100 HHs to distribute core relief items (CRI) kits, cash for emergency shelters, and cash for NFI in the Sool and Togdheer regions.

In Burao, UNHCR, through its partners, conducted a joint vulnerability assessment that led to the selection of hybrid shelters and latrines for 37 HHs. The procurement of construction material is expected to be completed in April.

In Hargeisa, 39 refugee and asylum seeker HHs, the majority of whom were single women suffering from eviction, insecurity, or flooding, received cash in lieu of emergency shelters from UNHCR's partner.

**Community Empowerment and Self Reliance**

In Mogadishu, UNHCR, through its partner, started vocational skills training on carpentry, plumbing, and business development for 40 males from refugee, returnee, IDP, and hosting communities. Female members of the same community have also been enrolled in beauty salon and tailoring classes, which will commence later.

In Bossaso, UNHCR handed over 18 boats and fishing gear to 90 individuals from refugee, returnee, IDP, and hosting communities as a part of a fishery project with technical training support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Puntland Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources.

In Somaliland, UNHCR's partner trained 24 camp committee members to strengthen the governance structure inside the IDP sites. The participants improved their knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the CCCM, community participation, and referral pathways, among others, and gained practical experience in handling complaints and feedback mechanism, fire prevention and safety techniques, emergency planning, community mapping, and conflict resolution, among others.

**Capacity building**

In Hargeisa and Wajaale town near the Ethiopian border, UNHCR’s partner conducted four capacity-building training sessions, reaching 123 participants from the police, immigration detention centers, and immigration/border units. The aim of the training was to improve the protection environment for refugees and asylum seekers through knowledge of refugee law and international protection. After the training, the government officials improved their understanding of access to territory, the risks of arbitrary arrest, and refoulement. Participants discussed the challenges of accessing territory in Somaliland and the way forward to improve the right to seek asylum. They also requested more capacity development support, especially for officials in key border areas such as Wajaale and Goroyo-awl in Somaliland.

In Baidoa, UNHCR and ACTED co-facilitated 2 days of training on camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) for 60 cluster partners and stakeholders, including local government.

In Galkayo, UNHCR conducted training and rolled out roving Protection Desks in 15 IDP settlements located in different locations of Galmudug State. The induction training facilitated by UNHCR targeted 16 enumerators and...
representatives from local authorities. The participants received training on the basics of protection as well as the relevant tools to collect protection data.

- In Bossaso, UNHCR trained six partner organizations on Accountability to Affected Persons (AAP) to enhance the partners’ capacity to effectively serve the affected communities while remaining true to their responsibilities and obligations.
- In Jowhar and Mogadishu, UNHCR trained 20 enumerators on vulnerability assessment. After the training, the participants were able to understand concepts of sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud, and corruption and were able to identify persons with specific needs such as survivors of GBV and torture, people living with disabilities, the elderly at risk, children at risk, and women at risk, among others.

### Cluster Coordination and Leadership

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<th>Protection Cluster</th>
<th>Shelter Cluster Somalia</th>
<th>CCCM Cluster</th>
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<td># of beneficiaries reached by the Shelter Cluster</td>
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### Protection Cluster

- Quarterly response update: In the first quarter of 2023, protection responders have reached over 1.2 million of the 3.2 million people targeted with only 7% of the total required funding. This high reach has to do with protection partners increasingly being compelled to resort to “high-reach and low-cost activities”, such as awareness raising, due to the funding scarcity. The Protection Cluster is advocating for a stronger focus on protection delivery.

- Protection of Civilians: The Protection Cluster in Somalia is working with partners to identify the main implications for the protection of civilians emanating from the ongoing military offensive against NSAG, which is anticipated to expand into a major offensive dubbed “Black Lion” with the participation of frontline states. The Protection Cluster together with the Access Working Group is working on main scenarios and briefed the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) on the anticipated protection implications. Together with partners, the cluster is working on a prevention strategy to reduce risks, while preparing for the response. As part of its prevention work, the Protection Cluster is engaging with key interlocutors in the government, military, and stabilization actors.

- Fast-tracking the inclusion of minorities and other marginalized groups: The Protection Cluster is joining hands with Food Security and CCCM clusters to scale up a fast-track mechanism to include those at heightened risk of exclusion from the drought response, notably households of minorities and other marginalized groups. This joint venture is based on pilot projects in South Galkayo and Baidoa. Its goal is to end these groups’ structural exclusion and improve their safety and food security at the same time.
Enhanced support to people with disabilities: The Protection Cluster, jointly with the CCCM Cluster and key partners, including organizations of people with disabilities, has launched its working group to advance disability inclusion in the response as well as to increase the tailored support to people with disabilities.

Shelter Cluster

The Shelter Cluster partners reached 79,696 individuals with NFIs and 26,708 individuals with shelter assistance in March. Cumulatively in 2023, 229,410 individuals or 16% of the targeted population have received Shelter or NFI assistance from the cluster partners.

Shelter remains one of the top priority needs of the displaced population. Around 4.9 million people are in need of shelter and NFI assistance in Somalia.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster

During the reporting period, CCCM Cluster partners conducted site verification assessments to authenticate existing IDP sites and to rule out fake ones in three districts. In Buuhoodle district, 15 sites with 7,307 HHs (44,250 individuals), in Xudin district five sites with 930 HHs (5,580 individuals), and in Laasacaanood district in Sool region five sites with 11,800 HHs (70,800 individuals) were assessed.

Service monitoring activities were conducted across 1,364 IDP sites covering 33 districts under the administration of 16 partners. Overall, 57% of the sites had access to water; 51% of the sites had education facilities within the sites; 84% had health facilities; and 69% had nutrition facilities. 92% of the sites were made up of emergency shelters, and only 17% of households claimed to have received cash or food assistance within the last 6 months.

In March, the number of issues raised through the CCCM-managed complaint and feedback mechanism in March stood at 4,614, a decreased by 40% compared to the previous month. Most of the complaints raised in March were attributed to food and livelihood needs (2,131), which made up 46% of the total issues recorded, followed by shelter (926), and WASH (490), which made up 20% and 11% of the total issues recorded, respectively.

The CCCM Cluster partners conducted 85 meetings with local authorities in Dayniile, Khada, Beletweyne, and Kismayo to discuss service delivery to drought-displaced new arrivals. Site-level meetings with camp management committees (CMCs) and community members were also held in Xudur, Galkayo, and Marka among other locations to allocate space and deliver services to the newly arrivals.

To enhance communication with communities, the CCCM Cluster partners conducted orientation sessions on available humanitarian services, including malnutrition screening for newly displaced IDPs from Laasacaanood in Garowe, Buuhoodle, Gardo, and Galkayo. The partners also carried out door to door sessions and public awareness-raising campaigns in IDP sites, coupled with the distribution of posters and the erecting of billboards in several sites, with the intention of providing reliable information on available services; a total of 23,920 participants attended these sessions. With the start of the GU rainy season, in Baidoa, information campaign on flood mitigation measures were conducted in areas that are prone to flooding.

The CCCM Cluster partners conducted site decongestion activities to improve access and mitigate the risk of fire in congested sites, waste disposal management and drainage systems. The partners carried out a total of 955 site improvement activities, including regular site cleanup campaigns to collect garbage/wastes using Cash for Work approach by engaging site maintenance committees and community volunteers.
Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2023 amount to **USD 16.8 million**. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have already contributed to the Somalia Operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

**External / Donors Relations**

**Thanks to the donors of earmarked contributions to Somalia Operation in 2023 | USD**

United States of America 4.4 million | CERF 3.2 million | Japan 3.1 million | Germany 1.1 million | World Food Programme 0.5 million

Denmark | Other private donors

**Thanks to the donors of softly earmarked contributions to UNHCR in 2023 | USD**

United States of America 7.2 million | Canada 3.9 million | Private donors Australia 2.1 million

**Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted funds to UNHCR in 2023 | 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 | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

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