

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

## July – September 2023

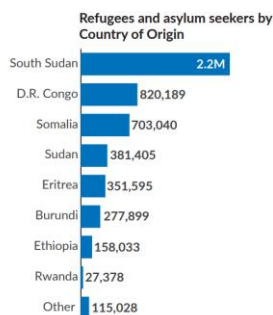


South Sudan. Thousands fleeing Sudan violence arriving at Renk transit centre in South Sudan. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

### KEY FIGURES (AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2023)

**5M** Refugees and Asylum-seekers  
**14.6M** Internally Displaced Persons  
**371,185** Refugee Returnees in 2023

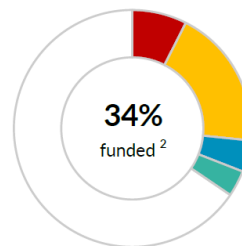
### REFUGEES & ASYLUM SEEKERS TOTALS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



### FUNDING UPDATE (AS OF 4 OCTOBER 2023)

**USD 2.1 Billion**

2023 financial requirements for the EHAGL region



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

### EAST HORN AND GREAT LAKES

as of 4 October 2023

## OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (EHAGL) region is currently hosting 5 million refugees and asylum-seekers, as at the end of 30 September 2023. One out of every six refugees globally is hosted in the region. Additionally, a further 14.6 million people are internally displaced in the region as a result of conflict and natural disasters. A total of 371,185 refugees were documented as having returned to their countries of origin between January and September 2023.

Millions of people in the region continue to flee their homes due to conflict, climate-related events and political violence. The ongoing conflict in Sudan that continues to displace millions of people, conflicts in parts of Ethiopia, Somalia and the DRC, the global economic downturn, repercussions from the Ukraine war, floods and droughts stoked by climate change have exacerbated existing difficulties in providing basic services to displaced people, finding safety, livelihood activities, feeding families and educating children.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### SITUATIONAL UPDATES

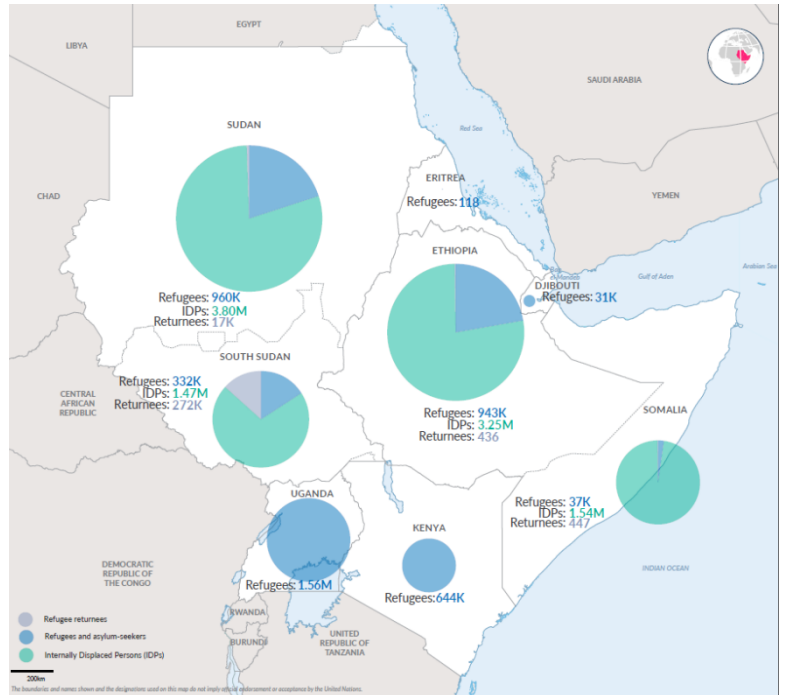
**SUDAN SITUATION:** Since 15 April 2023, Sudan has been engulfed in conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), resulting in a severe humanitarian and security crisis. The conflict has particularly impacted Khartoum, Darfur, and Kordofan states, resulting in the breakdown of essential government services and the destruction of critical national infrastructure, including hospitals and schools. The situation in Sudan remains marked by extreme physical insecurity, loss of life, arbitrary arrests, extortion, robberies, forced recruitment (including children), sexual violence and human trafficking. Human rights violations persist, especially in Khartoum and have escalated in the Darfur region. In areas less affected by direct conflict, services are overstretched and unable to meet the essential needs on the ground. The healthcare system is struggling to cope with a growing health crisis exacerbated by disease outbreaks, including malaria, dengue, measles, and cholera. These outbreaks are driven by food insecurity, rising malnutrition, and deficiencies in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities. The conflict has displaced almost 4.3 million people from their homes within Sudan.

As of 30 September, over 1 million refugees, asylum seekers, third-country nationals, and returnees, have fled Sudan, seeking refuge in neighbouring countries of Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. Smaller numbers are fleeing into Libya, Tunisia and Uganda. The majority of the outflows consist of Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers, as well as refugees from other nationalities. Chad has received 423,000, Egypt 310,000, CAR 15,000, Ethiopia 37,000 and South Sudan 32,000 Sudanese refugees and refugees from other nationalities. Some 287,000 returns have been recorded, primarily to South Sudan. Ethiopia and CAR have reported 1,691 and 4,701 returns, respectively. Latest figures are available [here](#).

Sudan and neighbouring countries were already hosting large refugee and IDP populations prior to the new crisis. All six country operations continue to be severely underfunded with the new emergency creating significant additional needs, which is affecting the ability to adequately respond to the needs of both existing and newly displaced populations.

Inside Sudan, the humanitarian situation remains dire due to ongoing fighting and shortages of food, water and fuel, limited communications and electricity, and very high prices of essential items. Health care has been critically affected and there is severe shortages of medicines and vital supplies. The health care situation is also extremely worrying in the neighbouring countries of Chad, Ethiopia and South Sudan as new arrivals continue across the respective borders to extremely remote areas with limited, or often non-existent medical structures in place. Aid agencies and national health staff are doing all that they can with the limited resources but continue to struggle to keep up with the health needs as the crisis continues. Read more in the [health and nutrition update](#).

Despite the conflict, UNHCR remains committed to stay and deliver inside Sudan. International and national staff are present in eight locations across the country, delivering protection and assistance to the forcibly displaced population both in response to the emergency and in line with UNHCR's regular programmes. UNHCR has established a small representation office in Port Sudan (Red Sea State), while the situation in Khartoum remains insecure. Some national staff remain present delivering protection and assistance where it is safe to do so in the Darfur and Kordofan regions, but operations have been downscaled as a result of persisting insecurity in many areas. UNHCR operations in White Nile, Gedaref, Kassala, Girba, and Blue Nile states have remained fully operational. New field hubs have been established in Wadi Halfa (Northern state) and in Wad Madani (Jazirah state). Additionally, UNHCR has



established a presence in the proposed common UN hub in Chad to respond to the situation in Darfur through cross-border operations. A back office has also been established in Nairobi, Kenya to provide remote support.

**DROUGHT AND FLOODING SITUATION:** Across the region, climate impacts continue to exacerbate the challenges vulnerable populations face with the combination of conflict and drought – followed by rains and flooding – severely affecting their search for safety, basic necessities and a means to survive. Our responses across the region factors in the impact of extreme weather events, such as the recurring cycle of droughts and floods attributed to climate change. The ongoing impacts of the catastrophic drought suffered by the Horn of Africa continue to severely affect millions of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their host communities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

By the end of September, according to [UNHCR's drought dashboard](#) 2.3 million people had been internally displaced in Ethiopia and Somalia due to the drought and some 265,000 new refugees and asylum-seekers had crossed from and into drought-affected areas of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

**In Somalia**, drought, armed conflict, and clashes between clans continued to uproot thousands of Somalis from their homes. Better than expected rainfall in 2023 and responses from the local population, authorities, and humanitarian community have averted the worst outcomes of the drought, yet the situation is still of concern with livelihoods decimated and millions still displaced. It is estimated that 8.25 million people require humanitarian assistance; 4.3 million are facing acute food insecurity; and 1.5 million children are likely to be acutely malnourished from August to December 2023<sup>1</sup>.

In the aftermath of the historic drought, a large-scale humanitarian response and favorable rainfall deterred famine in early 2023. Yet, Somalia is on the verge of another climate emergency, as there is a high likelihood that El-Niño, during the *Deyr* rainy season that starts in October, will bring heavy rains and floods. More up-to-date information about displacement and the protection needs of the IDPs can be found at the new PRMN online interactive dashboard: <https://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/>.

**In Ethiopia**, parts of the Oromia region have recently felt the impact of the *Kiremt* rainy season with heavy rainfall and floods. The Joint Government and Humanitarian Partners Flood Contingency Plan for 2023 *Kiremt* season had forecasted that more than 270,200 people were likely to be affected in Oromia. (Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/unfpa-ethiopia-humanitarian-response-situation-report-august-2023>). The main needs for displaced populations include food, shelter, and non-food items, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and healthcare services, especially to prevent the exacerbation of malaria and cholera outbreaks due to the floods. While in West Hararge Zone, Oromia region, seventy thousand families have reportedly lost the Meher crop due to the long dry sessions during the months of July and August which could significantly increase the number of people requiring food assistance. According to a recent multiagency assessment, IDPs hosted in West Guji have not received assistance for several months due to insecurity and funding constraints. About 159,400 people in West Guji, Oromia region, will remain in need of food assistance for the coming six to eight months, because of low crop yields due to the impact of environmental change.

In the Somali region, over one million people are reportedly facing acute water shortages in 323 locations across Afder, Dawa, Korahe, Liban and Shabelle zones. Despite rains between April and June this year, pastoral and agropastoral communities have lost their primary sources of water, mainly surface water structures such as boreholes and river intakes in the drier months of June, July, and August. Zonal authorities are currently providing water to affected communities through water trucking, however the situation requires urgent funding to address shortages particularly in the IDP sites. (see also OCHA Situation Report, 7 September 2023 and 9 October 2023. Link: <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia>).

**In Kenya**, among the 23 arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya, there are ten (10) counties in alarm phase, ten others are in alert stage, while three (3) are in normal drought due to moderate off-season rains. Garissa county experienced below-average rainfall in September 2023 with only 8.60 mm compared to the long-term average of 17.1 mm.

In Dadaab in September, there were reportedly 942,000 children under 5 years and 134,000 pregnant and lactating women, who required treatment for acute malnutrition, an increase from the 884,464 children and 115,725 women who required such treatment in August 2023.

**BURUNDI SITUATION:** By the end of September 2023, countries in the Great Lakes Region were host to 323,623 Burundian refugees.

UNHCR and partners have been facilitating the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees since 2017. More than 225,300 Burundian refugees had been recorded as having returned by the end of September 2023. Most returned from Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, and other countries. 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 the arrival of returnees in their province of return, UNHCR and its partners conduct follow-up activities to review their level of reintegration. Monitoring data indicates a low capacity of returnees to access essential social services, which makes some refugees 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 significant challenge. For example, over 69% of returnees are not satisfied with their level

<sup>1</sup> <https://fsnau.org/downloads/Somalia-IPC-Acute-Food-Insecurity-Malnutrition-Report-Aug-Dec-2023.pdf>

of food security. Nevertheless, there have been improvements in the security and justice sectors (land dispute resolution) compared to previous years.

An improvement has been reported following registration campaigns where 73% of adults in households have reported to have national identity cards and 75% of children received birth certificates in 2023, as compared to 69% in 2022.

In 2023, 39% of repatriated households used their cash allowance for the acquisition of land (fields), but only 18% were able to practice farming during the last crop season, citing lack of seeds and agricultural tools. 89% of the returnee households report living on less than USD 3 per month on average. Many returnees living in border areas cross the border back and forth to engage in temporary labour.



Burundi. UNHCR's Clements urges more support for Burundian refugees returning home © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

**SOUTH SUDAN SITUATION:** After nearly a decade of conflict and despite efforts toward implementing the peace agreement, South Sudan continues to grapple with sporadic violence, chronic food insecurity and devastating flooding, often affecting achievements on the humanitarian front.

The South Sudanese refugee population, more than 65% of whom are children, remains extremely vulnerable. This protracted situation is the largest refugee situation on the African continent. Over 2.2 million refugees hosted in neighbouring countries live in often precarious conditions, exacerbated by various factors such as conflict, extreme weather conditions and food insecurity situation in the region. Over 46,000 South Sudanese have fled to neighbouring countries since the beginning of 2023, while 334,000 returns have been recorded, the majority fleeing the violence in Sudan. As of 30 September 2023, a total of 898,555 of the refugee population was hosted in Uganda, 680,994 in Sudan, 417,417 in Ethiopia, 170,177 in Kenya and 53,406 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

**SOMALIA SITUATION:** At the end of September 2023, there were 749,062 Somali refugees in neighbouring countries. Somalia currently has a total of 3.9 million internally displaced due to conflict and natural disasters.

The operating environment in Somalia is complex. Decades of conflict and insecurity, political tensions, clan dynamics, and climate change have resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. In 2023 alone, there have been almost 1.5 million internal displacements, primarily due to conflict or insecurity (40%), drought (29%), and flooding (28%).

The damage from the longest drought on record may take years to recover from. In April-June, flash floods displaced thousands of Somalis, and El Nino in October-December is predicted to bring extreme flooding.

**LAS CAANOOD SITUATION:** The outbreak of violence in the Somali city of Las caanood in early February 2023 triggered mass displacement of civilians including across the border into Ethiopia. The armed conflict between the non-state armed groups (NSAG) and Somali security forces continued with sporadic incidents of shelling during the reporting period; large swaths of land continue to be inaccessible to humanitarian actors.

The Ethiopian Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) and UNHCR have been conducting Level 2 registration for Somali refugees in Mirqaan, in the Doolo zone of the Somali region. This comprehensive approach gathers detailed individual information, aiding UNHCR and partners in tailoring assistance and protection to the needs of the beneficiaries. To date, more than 40,500 individuals have undergone L2 registration, after having been relocated to Mirqaan settlement. Since February, 100,000 Somali refugees have arrived in the Doolo zone of the Somali region.

## COUNTRY UPDATES

**BURUNDI:** As of 30 September 2023, Burundi was host to 386,946 persons of concern. This includes 225,341 returnees mainly from Tanzania, Rwanda, DRC and Uganda and a further 87,674 registered refugees and asylum-seekers as well as 73,931 IDPs.

With increased resettlement needs for Congolese refugees in Burundi, which currently stands at 18,500, UNHCR Burundi processes resettlement cases from three locations: Ruyigi, Muyinga, and Bujumbura. The quota allocation for Burundi for 2023 was increased to 5,400 including referrals to the USA (4,950), Australia (250), and Canada (200).

Under the objectives of the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), Burundi continues efforts to broaden refugee access to solutions in third countries by seeking complementary pathways such as family reunification, humanitarian corridors, education, and labor mobility programs.

**ETHIOPIA:** Ethiopia is the third largest refugee hosting country in Africa, home to 946,214 refugees and asylum seekers — mainly from South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea. Ethiopia continues to face substantial humanitarian challenges and is reeling from inflation, conflict, and climate shocks, which have resulted in massive displacement of civilians.

Majority of the refugees and asylum seekers live in refugee camps and settlements established across different regional states, while over 78,000 reside as urban refugees in the capital Addis Ababa. UNHCR maintains a robust field presence including in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Oromia, Somali and Tigray regions, as well as in the city of Dire Dawa. Side by side with emergency response and the provision of protection and lifesaving humanitarian needs for the over 127,000 new arrivals from Somalia and Sudan, as well as millions of IDPs, UNHCR continues to promote self-reliance of refugees and host communities, and search for solutions.

UNHCR, in collaboration with the respective Regional Health Bureaus and the World Health Organization, is actively engaged in responding to health crises affecting refugees in the Amhara and Gambella regions. The response strategy encompasses critical areas such as planning, coordination, resource mobilization, laboratory services, active infection prevention and control measures, surveillance, and monitoring, as well as risk communication and community engagement. These efforts are geared towards mitigating risks, supporting ongoing regional preparedness for vaccinations, and bolstering response plans. In the Amhara region's Kumer settlement, where some 10,000 refugees who arrived from Sudan are sheltered, a cholera outbreak led to the admission of 244 patients to the Cholera Treatment Centre and unfortunately, six fatalities have been recorded.

In the Gambella region, a separate health emergency had arisen with a measles outbreak, already affecting three camps (Kule, Nguenyiel and Tierkidi). There were 42 reported cases at the end of September, including 30 involving children under the age of five. Regrettably, three deaths were reported. UNHCR has continued to work closely with all partners to ensure the health and well-being of these vulnerable populations, as well as to prevent further outbreaks and provide the necessary support for those affected.

After being suspended from June 2023, food assistance for refugees resumed at the end of September based on WFP, UNHCR and the RRS having met all donor requirements and assurances.<sup>2</sup> While the existing food distribution model for refugees had already integrated a robust biometric verification process, other identified shortcomings in the food distribution process have been diligently rectified.

RRS issued work permits to 3,725 refugees in Gambella, bringing the total number of refugees with work permits in Ethiopia to 8,846. This figure includes 2,396 in the Somali region (Melkadida & Jigjiga), 1,383 in Benishangul-Gumuz, 429 in Afar, 494 in Amhara (Alemwach), as well as 419 permits issued in Addis Ababa, to refugees who are either self-employed or have secured wage-earning employments. Meanwhile in Gambella, refugees and members of the host community have planted 332 hectares of land with various types of crops as part of the drive to achieve self-reliance.

<sup>2</sup> By the time this update was released, the United States had [announced](#) it would resume food assistance to all populations in Ethiopia including IDPs in December 2023.

**KENYA:** As of 30 September 2023, Kenya was host to 654,147 registered refugees and asylum-seekers including 280,466 in Dadaab and 284,166 in Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement.

In Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement, 13,889 refugees and asylum seekers are in reception centres, awaiting registration. The reception centres are over-capacity and resources over-stretched. During the reporting period, UNHCR supported the Ministry of Health in responding to a measles outbreak (531 cases).

The Ministry of Education, UNHCR, World Bank and Global Partnership for Education visited Kakuma 18 – 19 September to better understand education service delivery and inclusion of refugees in the national education system. Over 94,000 children are attending camp-based schools.

In Dadaab refugee camp, between March 2022 and April 2023, UNHCR conducted a profiling exercise of new arrivals whereby 135,967 individuals were profiled and provided with assistance. Registration for this group started in March 2023. By the end-September, 37,743 refugees were registered by the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) and 98,224 are awaiting registration. Registration restarted on 29 September, after being suspended for two months due to technical difficulties.

On 28 July, the President of Kenya issued identification cards, birth certificates and passports to individuals from the Pemba community who have been living in the country for decades. The event, in Kilifi on Kenya's eastern coast, marked the completion of the registration process for all 7,000 members of the Pemba community, allowing them to fully access key services like education, healthcare, social protection, financial services and the formal labour market.



*The Pemba and Kenyans showed up in large numbers during Pemba's official recognition as Kenyan Citizens. ©UNHCR/Charity Nzomo*

Kenya hosted its first National Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Consultative Workshop on 7-8 August. This workshop was a pivotal step towards defining the Government of Kenya's position on refugee pledges in the country. The workshop brought together line Ministries, County Governments, and various stakeholders to examine best practices, challenges, and opportunities towards galvanizing the nation's efforts and work towards comprehensive solutions. A Joint Secretariat is currently working on the roadmap for the Shirika Plan - a multi-year plan by the Kenyan national government to promote the socio-economic inclusion of refugees by transforming camps into integrated settlements, which will be launched in November. Read more in the [Kenya Shirika Plan July 2023 Update](#).

On 28 September, the Garissa Integrated Socioeconomic Development Plan (GISED P) was launched during a ceremony in Nairobi. More than 364,000 refugees and asylum-seekers and 397,000 members of host communities could benefit from this sustainable plan for an area-based development approach to the refugee response. Find out more: <https://www.unhcr.org/ke/gisedp-1>.

**RWANDA:** Rwanda hosted about 135,733 refugees and asylum-seekers as of the end of September 2023. The population of concern includes mainly persons from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (61.4%) and Burundi (38%).

Due to fighting in North-Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since November 2022, asylum seekers from the DRC have been fleeing into Rwanda's western province. As of the end September, 12,684 Congolese individuals had fled to Rwanda.

Due to the increasing need for space to host the new arrivals, since July, UNHCR in coordination with the Ministry In charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) and partners has been transferring asylum seekers from Nkamira to existing refugee camps in Rwanda. From July to the end of September UNHCR facilitated the transfer of 5,040 asylum seekers in seven convoys from Nkamira Transit Centre to Kigeme, Kiziba, Mahama, Mugombwa and Nyabiheke refugee camps. This number also includes a convoy which transferred 1,059 Congolese asylum seekers on 7 September to Mahama refugee camp, making it the fourth relocation convoy to Mahama since the beginning of the emergency.

UNHCR worked with the Government of Rwanda through the National Identification Agency (NIDA) and Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) to conduct a biometric enrolment exercise in Kiziba, Kigeme and Mugombwa camps. Through this process the biometrics of refugees were collected, and refugee ID cards renewed, distributed or replaced. Refugee ID cards form an important means through which refugees can access national services in Rwanda. In September, the annual ID Biometric Exercise concluded in all camps. During the exercise a combined total of over 6,000 refugees were assisted with biometric capture, renewal of expired and lost IDs, correction and other documentation related issues.

In July, UNHCR completed the enrolment of urban based refugees and UNHCR-assisted boarding school students within the community-based health insurance (CBHI) scheme for the upcoming year (July 2023 – June 2024). In total, 9,952 individuals were enrolled in the state-run health insurance for which UNHCR pays the premium for refugees who live in urban areas. UNHCR also disseminated communications to the refugee population to urge them to check their enrolment status and continues to follow up with additional eligible cases.

In September, 294 Rwandan refugees returned home, bringing the total to 1,301 so far in 2023. UNHCR provides cash assistance to Rwandan refugees returning to Rwanda from abroad. The reintegration grant is USD 250 per adult and USD 150 per child. When returnees initially arrive in Rwanda, they will receive 20 percent of the cash assistance value from UNHCR through Equity Bank while they are hosted in UNHCR transit centres. Upon their return to their location of origin, and verification and provision of national identity cards by the National Identification Agency (NIDA), returnees will receive the remaining 80 percent of the cash assistance. UNHCR in Rwanda is currently lacking funding to support additional Rwandan returns in 2023.

**SOMALIA:** Somalia hosts some 37,241 refugees and asylum-seekers, of whom 68% are women and children; 31% are school-age children (6-17 years); and 26% are women and girls of reproductive age (13-49 years). Majority of the refugees and asylum-seekers (67%) are from Ethiopia, followed by Yemen (28%), Syria (4%), and other countries (1%). Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers (75%) reside in urban or peri-urban settings across the Woqooyi Galbeed and Bari regions, both of which are in the northern part of the country.

Since January 2020, a total of 7,583 former refugees have returned to Somalia from their countries of asylum, mostly from Yemen, followed by Kenya. From the total number of refugee returnees, 2,351 individuals have been directly assisted by UNHCR, mainly through the Voluntary Repatriation Programme from Kenya and the Assisted Spontaneous Returns (ASR) Programme from Yemen. UNHCR continues to monitor and support an additional 5,232 returnees who returned to Somalia on their own.

On 13 September, the Refugee Bill was passed by the lower house of the Somali Parliament. This landmark legislation marks a significant milestone in ensuring the protection and welfare of refugees within Somalia's borders. The next step is for the upper house to approve the bill before the Somali President signs it into law. UNHCR continues to advocate with the Federal Government of Somalia for the endorsement of the bill.

UNHCR works with federal and local authorities as well as development and humanitarian partners, to secure land tenure rights, champion sound settlement planning, construct durable shelters and climate-friendly infrastructure, and deliver sustainable livelihood projects to promote durable solutions/local integration. In 2023, UNHCR has provided 754 individuals with transitional shelters, and 538 individuals received durable shelters. UNHCR has also supported 20,913 IDPs with core relief items, 15,113 individuals with multipurpose cash assistance, and 1,566 individuals with emergency shelter kits this year. In addition, 6,857 Gender Based Violence (GBV) survivors were identified this year and received case management and psychosocial support.

**SOUTH SUDAN:** South Sudan hosted a total of 336,609 refugees and asylum-seekers by the end of September 2023, mainly from Sudan and the DRC and has over 2.2 million IDPs. Additionally, about 2.2 million South Sudanese are refugees in the neighbouring countries of Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Since the start of the fighting in Sudan on 15 April 2023, the influx of people fleeing to South Sudan has increased significantly. The UN and partners mobilized immediately to support the authorities of South Sudan in assisting people in hard-to-reach areas with very limited infrastructure, particularly in the most remote border areas, and in those locations where host communities are already extremely vulnerable. The authorities identified main border entry points along the Sudan-South Sudan border as areas expected to receive large number of cross-border movements. In these locations, UNHCR and IOM are supporting the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) in collecting data at 27 points of entry, setting up transit facilities and supporting voluntary movement of individuals to various areas, including areas of origin.

UNHCR is working closely with the Commission of Refugee Affairs (CRA) to build national asylum capacity, advocate with authorities to uphold the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers and support national inclusion of the displaced in national services such as education, healthcare, and birth registration. Additionally, UNHCR is working with displaced and local communities to carry out regular protection monitoring in locations with internal displacement and refugee return, while also leading the coordination with humanitarian actors under the Protection Cluster and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster.

As of 30 September, a cumulative number of 287,000 individuals have arrived in South Sudan. Within this figure, a total of 32,000 were refugees and asylum-seekers whereas the rest were South Sudanese returnees. At least 27 per cent of the households include vulnerable individuals. The new arrivals are being hosted in Wedwil Refugee Settlement in Northern Bahr El Ghazal State, Gorom Refugee Settlement in Central Equatoria State and the Maban camps in Upper Nile State. With the continued high rate of arrivals, Renk transit centre is congested, and shelters are overcrowded. New arrivals have been settling in makeshift shelters outside the transit centre, which escalates protection risks. Using a vulnerability profiling tool, protection teams are improving targeted assistance and referrals at transit centres and reception areas. At Renk transit centre, protection help desks support the identification and referral of vulnerable individuals. Among them, identification is ongoing for new arrivals who were refugees registered in Sudan and were already in the resettlement pipeline to facilitate their cases.

Amidst the current emergency, South Sudan finds itself at a critical juncture in the implementation of the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. As part of the 2018 Revitalized Agreement, activities supporting constitution-making and elections are ongoing. To support these processes, consultations with IDPs, returnees, and refugees are taking place, with the aim to overcome barriers that hinder displaced populations' participation in these processes, address their specific needs, and promote a sense of belonging. The active engagement of displaced populations is crucial for South Sudan's transition towards stability and lasting peace.

**SUDAN:** Sudan has historically hosted one of the largest refugee populations in Africa. Prior to the conflict, Sudan hosted 1.1 million refugees, majority of whom resided in Khartoum State. Since the start of conflict, UNHCR and partners have been able to map the internal movement of refugees within Sudan. An estimated 187,000 have moved towards safer areas. As of end-July 2023, an estimated 963,400 refugees and asylum seekers remain in Sudan.

UNHCR is scaling up its IDP response across the country, building on the previous IDP response and expanding it to new areas now hosting IDPs, notably in the East (Kassala, Gedaref, Jazirah, Blue and White Nile states) and the North. UNHCR is adopting a community-based approach considering the majority of IDPs living in communities, as well as seeking to scale up community-based interventions to invest in vocational skills, access to markets and livelihoods to reduce dependency and enable the self-sufficiency of the newly displaced people, while supporting the most vulnerable with tailored individual assistance.

During the reporting period, UNHCR and the Commission for Refugees (COR) continued the verification of refugees who have self-relocated within Sudan, from Khartoum and conflict areas, to the eastern states and White Nile State. UNHCR teams on the ground continue to support authorities with verification, and registration, including to ensure proper identification and unhindered access to services.

UNHCR is increasing field presence in Wadi Halfa to actively engage communities stranded in this border area while waiting to process their documentation for entry into Egypt. Protection monitoring and awareness activities are being carried out on relevant issues such as risks of GBV and trafficking in persons.

Where security and mobility permit, UNHCR and partners continue to monitor the situation of persons of concern through direct visits. UNHCR also strives to access hard-to-reach areas remotely, through community-based protection networks, community outreach volunteers, and refugee leaders, connectivity permitting.

UNHCR continues to work directly with the Ministry of Education (MoE) at the State level to ensure quality education for refugees in Sudan. Despite the outbreak of conflict, UNHCR has been able to continue supporting refugee children with access to education in the states of White Nile, Blue Nile, Gedaref, Kassala, and Jazirah.

In September, UNHCR and WHO issued [a joint press release](#) raising alarm of the deteriorating health conditions caused by the Sudan crisis.

In response to the influx of displaced arrivals from Khartoum and conflict areas into established camps and settlements in Sudan, which has greatly overwhelmed WASH services and capacities, UNHCR and partners provide support in sustaining the capacity of WASH systems to deliver safe and potable water through the maintenance, rehabilitation, and operation of water facilities.

The delivery of shelter and NFI assistance in Sudan has been greatly hampered by the looting and destruction of several UNHCR and partner warehouses, including UNHCR's central warehouse in North Kordofan. Despite significant setbacks and bureaucratic and administrative impediments, UNHCR has been able to continue the provision of lifesaving assistance and shelter, including tents, communal shelters, and emergency shelter kits.

To support IDPs in independently meeting their basic needs, UNHCR re-started cash-based interventions in July 2023 with initial distributions completed in Gedaref and Wadi Halfa, and interventions planned or ongoing in Red, Sea, Kassala, and White Nile State.



**TANZANIA:** By 30 September 2023, Tanzania hosted 235,082 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Most reside in the Nyarugusu and Nduta refugee camps, representing 83% of the camp-based population.

Violent clashes in the eastern DRC have driven over 13,000 Congolese to flee their homes for safety in Tanzania as of September. Most of the asylum seekers come from Baraka, Uvira, Fizi, Goma, and Masisi. To accommodate the surge of Congolese asylum seekers, a total of 71 communal facilities were built, renovated, or installed in Nyarugusu and the National Milling Cooperation transit center in Kigoma. Three communal facilities were also constructed in the Nduta refugee camp.

During initial interviews, asylum seekers indicated fear of being targeted by all armed groups, forced recruitment of young men, and generalized violence, including gender-based, as reasons for fleeing.

Advocacy efforts continue with the Government of Tanzania to open operational space inside of the refugee camps with regards to the restrictions to market-based livelihoods that have the potential to enable refugees to become self-reliant. Open markets and small businesses that could enhance household incomes and help to perfect/practice skills gained during Technical, Vocational, Education, and Training / Vocational Skills Training (TVET/VST) programmes remain banned.

Despite challenges, 2,182 persons received support on kitchen gardening (1,325 people, 872 female) TVET / VST (857 people, 470 female) since January 2023. A cross-border programme between Tanzania and Burundi supported by the European Union has been approved to commence in October 2023. This four-year EU supported cross-border program will further strengthen reintegration programming for Burundian refugees.

**UGANDA:** By the end of June 2023, Uganda was hosting 1,561,634 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from South Sudan (882,765), Democratic Republic of Congo (494,874), Somalia (69,535), Burundi (41,863) and other nationalities (72,597).

Refugee response partners in Uganda play a crucial role in providing protection, assistance, and solutions to the 1.5 million refugees and asylum seekers in the country. However, in 2023, partners face a significant challenge due to underfunding, which is exacerbated by a growing influx of new arrivals. By the end of September 2023, a total of 74,618 new arrivals were received, bringing the total new arrivals since 2022 to 225,000. While most refugees have fled violence in South Sudan or the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the recent conflict in Sudan has resulted in a total of 6,262 new arrivals from that conflict. The dwindling resources at a time when the needs are growing in the region is having an effect across all sectors and threatens to undermine or reverse modest gains made, leaving minimal resources to respond to growing protection needs. Consequently, the vulnerability of refugees is increasing. Read more on [the impact of underfunding on the Refugee Response](#).

On 3 and 4 August 2023, UNHCR Uganda facilitated a high-level workshop on the risks of statelessness in Uganda and engagement of the affected population. The objective of the workshop was to bring together representatives of the seven unrecognized indigenous tribes (Bahaya, Bakabu, Bakingwe, Baziba, Mosopishiek, Maragoli, Sabaot) to petition the Speaker of Parliament for a comprehensive amendment of the third schedule of the Constitution to include and recognize them as citizens of Uganda by birth. With UNHCR support, the indigenous tribes developed and signed a Petition and presented it to the Speaker of Parliament for review and approval. The Speaker will have the option to further review it or pass it through Parliamentary process for consideration - a long process ultimately requiring Presidential assent. Participants included the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, MPs, Government line Ministries, UN agencies, civil society and representatives of the unrecognized indigenous tribes.

On 9 August, a Global Refugee Forum (GRF) roundtable was held in Kampala on the theme of Localization (“Strengthening the Role Of Local And National Responders”). The outcome encompassed several draft policy pledges on the theme and the establishment of a multi-stakeholder committee aimed at refining these pledges to ensure specificity, measurability, and quantifiability. The meeting was chaired by three Ministers: the Minister of Local Government, the Minister of State for Local Government, and the Minister of State for Relief, Disaster Preparedness, and Refugees. It was well-attended by government officials at the district and national levels, UN agencies, humanitarian and development partners, as well as refugees.

On 7 and 8 August, as part of an AfDB-funded regional program on enhancing investment climate in refugee-hosting areas, UNHCR, the East African Community (EAC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) kicked off a series of Public-Private Dialogues with senior officials and business leaders on economic and financial inclusion of refugees in Kampala. The two-day policy dialogues discussed barriers to economic and financial inclusion of refugees in Nakivale and deliberated on measures and recommendations to explore opportunities to extend private sector engagement. The policy dialogues were well attended with active engagement from representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Prime Minister's Office, senior officials from the Local Government, Private Sector Foundation Uganda, World Bank, UN Women, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), development partners, banks, and businesses.

A GRF Roundtable on Climate Change, Environment and Energy took place on 19 July. The meeting was chaired by three state ministers (Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees; Environment; Energy and Mineral Development) and attended by district officials, UN agencies, humanitarian, development and private sector partners, and refugees. The government presented a situation analysis in the areas of climate change, environment and energy and the inter-linkages between the different sectors. Discussions were centered around opportunities, constraints, and recommendations for good policy pledges, that are measurable and quantifiable. As a way forward, an ad hoc task team will be constituted comprising of representatives from the Ministry of Water and

Environment (MWE), Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD), Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) Secretariat, UNHCR and other key United Nations Agencies.

The Refugee Engagement Forum (REF) – Uganda’s main, formal refugee participation mechanism - held its second 2023 session from 19-21 September. The forum was attended by 39 refugee leaders from 13 settlements and five representatives from Refugee Led Organizations (RLOs). Refugee self-reliance and how refugees are part of localization topped the agenda. The three GRF 2019 pledges made by refugees were reviewed, and new pledges were drafted around education, self-reliance and resilience, climate action, energy, and durable solutions.

On 8 August 2023, the World Bank Group issued a statement concerning Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act. The World Bank Group expressed that the Act contradicts its values and commitment to inclusivity and non-discrimination. According to their statement, the World Bank reviewed its portfolio in the context of the new legislation and declared that the “review determined additional measures are necessary to ensure projects are implemented in alignment with our environmental and social standards. Our goal is to protect sexual and gender minorities from discrimination and exclusion in the projects we finance. These measures are currently under discussion with the authorities. No new public financing to Uganda will be presented to our Board of Executive Directors until the efficacy of the additional measures has been tested.” UNHCR is currently studying the impact of the World Bank’s decision, which includes placing on hold projects under the WHR as well as under the IDA20. *For more information please see [World Bank Group Statement on Uganda](#).*

## REGIONAL UPDATES

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

Despite the Sudan conflict significantly impeding the progress made in the first quarter to pursue the Sudan-South Sudan Solutions Initiative for refugees, IDPs, returnees and vulnerable host communities, the UNHCR Special Envoy (SE) maintained commitment through high-level political advocacy focusing on South Sudan given the importance of solutions at this time of high returns from Sudan, as well as the link with the implementation of Chapter III of the Revised Peace Agreement.

The SE held high-level talks with the South Sudan government, urging swift endorsement of the National Durable Solutions Strategy—a vital framework for addressing forced displacement and showcasing government commitment. Collaboration was also stressed to protect the lives of returnees and refugees, involving key stakeholders like the EU, USAID, FCDO, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, and Germany in South Sudan.

Furthermore, the Special Envoy pressed for South Sudan’s commitment to make peace-building pledges at the upcoming Global Refugee Forum in December 2023, aiming to advance regional peace initiatives.

The SE successfully advocated for refugee inclusion in scholarship programs, resulting in UNHCR Kuwait and Kuwait Direct Aid (DA) signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 18 September 2023 to provide higher education opportunities for 40 refugee and returnee youth in Kenya, Somalia, and Tanzania at Direct Aid-affiliated universities. The virtual signing ceremony included the EHAGL Regional Bureau Director and the Special Envoy expressing gratitude to Direct Aid for their generous contribution to education for the most vulnerable.

Additionally, the Special Envoy conducted a mission to Qatar, updating stakeholders on Horn of Africa displacement situations as well as advocating for more support and expressing gratitude to UNHCR’s Private Sector Partners. The mission aimed to explore interest in supporting UNHCR’s programs in Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia. Meetings with Qatar Charity, Al Thani Fund, and Eid Charity resulted in raising funds as well as solidifying their commitment to continuing support for the displaced in the region.

### Development Partnerships

UNHCR teams at the regional and country offices have been working with various stakeholders from the region to identify potential speakers for GRF side events to ensure diverse representation in terms of geographic focus and stakeholder participation. Host governments and other entities from the region will be featuring either as speakers, country examples or moderators at various GRF Side Events. Four of the side events will have a leadership role by entities from the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes (EHAGL) region - Human Settlements/Camps to Communities led by the Government of Kenya, the Government of Uganda will lead the District Coordination side-event, and UNHCR’s EHAGL Regional Bureau will lead on the Sudan Situation side event with a focus on early development response as a demonstration of GCR in Action. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Support Platform will also host an event on progress made in finding Solutions for Displaced Populations and their Host Communities in the IGAD region. Also participating in a variety of other high-level side events are the governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia and South Sudan.

Various regional consultations held in July in Nairobi, Kenya provided an opportunity to take stock of progress in the implementation of GRF pledges made by various entities from the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes region as well as prospective pledges for 2023. UNHCR organized a first informal Regional Donor Consultation on the preparations for the 2023 Global Refugee Forum.

Participation from the US, Netherlands, Germany, EU and other donors provided a great exchange on identified priorities by countries in the region as well as areas of interest by donor countries. Similar donor consultations on the GRF will be scheduled at least bi-monthly in the run up to the GRF to ensure alignment.

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and UNHCR organized an Expert Conference on eradication of statelessness and access to legal identity documentation in the Great Lakes region. Government Focal Points for Statelessness from 10 ICGLR Member States updated on progress and challenges faced in implementing over 95 statelessness-related pledges made by ICGLR Member States and other pledging entities in the Great Lakes Region. Some of the challenges hindering progress to implement the pledges include the lack of necessary technical and financial support. A new study by the ICGLR Secretariat and UNHCR - launched at the conference - highlights risks of statelessness for refugees who have spent more than 20 years outside their country of origin, and especially for their descendants born in exile. A Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on comprehensive durable solutions for refugees, organized by ReDSS, ICGLR and UNHCR, provided another occasion for Member States of ICGLR countries to review progress on the implementation of the 2019 solution-oriented pledges made by the ICGLR Secretariat and its member states, as well as a discussion on gaps and challenges faced. UNHCR provided an overview of the upcoming 2023 multi-stakeholder pledges related to durable solutions as well as possibilities for pre-matching of new pledges ahead of the December event.

During the reporting period, IGAD provided support to its Member States in convening national consultative workshops in preparation for the GRF. These national consultations provide moments for member states to take stock of the achievements, lessons learnt, highlight challenges and best practices on the implementation of the 2019 GRF pledges and concretize on the formulation of new pledges ahead of the 2023 GRF. The consultations were organized under the auspices of the IGAD Support Platform on Forced Displacement. In September, IGAD convened national GRF consultative workshops on the preparations for the GRF 2023 in South Sudan and Somalia, and to review the draft IGAD Regional Policy Framework on Refugee Protection. IGAD's annual ministerial stock-take meeting of the IGAD Support Platform for the Implementation of the Nairobi Process/Global Compact on Refugees is, scheduled to take place from 20 to 23 November 2023 in Mogadishu, Somalia.

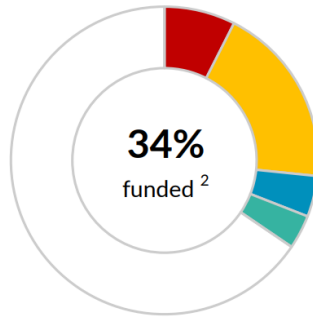
## Financial Information

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.



**\$ 2.161 billion**

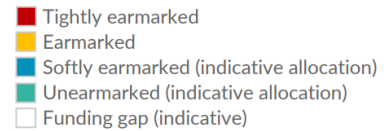
UNHCR's financial requirements 2023 <sup>1</sup>



## FUNDING UPDATE | 2023

### EAST HORN AND GREAT LAKES

as of 4 October 2023



#### 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 (34%) and total funding amount (\$745,275,357) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$1,415,415,821 representing 66% of the financial requirements.

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