

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

October – December 2024



Newly arrived Sudanese refugees in the border town of Adre, in Chad. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

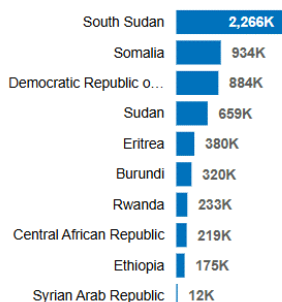
## KEY FIGURES (AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024)

**5.6M** Refugees and Asylum-seekers

**20.7M** Internally Displaced Persons

**445K** Refugee Returnees in 2024

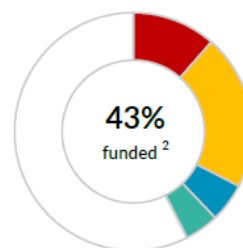
## REFUGEES IN THE EHAGL REGION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



## FUNDING UPDATE (AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024)

**USD 2.2 Billion**

2024 financial requirements for the EHAGL region



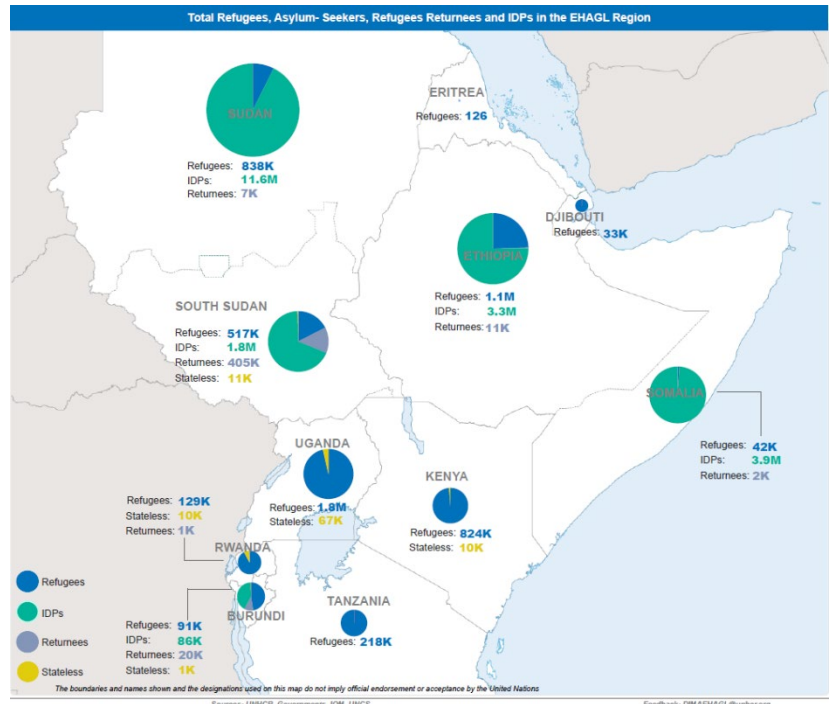
■ Tightly earmarked  
■ Earmarked  
■ Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)  
■ Unearmarked (indicative allocation)  
 Funding gap (indicative)

**EAST HORN AND GREAT LAKES**  
as of 31 December 2024

## OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

By the end of 2024, the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region hosted about 5.6 million refugees and asylum-seekers and 20.7<sup>1</sup> million internally displaced persons (IDPs), totalling 26.3 million displaced people. The majority of refugees and asylum-seekers were in Uganda (1.8 million), Ethiopia (1.1 million), Sudan (838,000) and Kenya (824,000). Internally displaced persons were mainly in Sudan (11.6 million), Ethiopia (3.3 million), Somalia (3.9 million), South Sudan (1.8 million) and Burundi (86,000). Some 445,000 refugees had been documented as having returned to their countries of origin since the start of the year.

The region continues to grapple with multiple crises. The El Niño-triggered heavy rains affected over 2.8 million people across Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda. The crisis impacted refugees and IDPs, displacing thousands of people within their countries. UNHCR and partners provided life-saving assistance and protection to the affected populations, while addressing significant challenges compounded by Sudan's ongoing conflict.



On 19 November, the 2025 UNHCR [Global Appeal](#) seeking USD 10 billion was launched, targeting urgent humanitarian needs for over 139 million refugees, displaced persons, and stateless individuals. The appeal focuses on emergency response, inclusion, and long-term solutions, aiming to integrate displaced populations into local systems for education, healthcare, and employment. With the launch of the appeal, the High Commissioner called for global solidarity and innovative solutions to address forced displacement driven by conflict, persecution, and climate change, with some of the largest funding needs concentrated in Africa.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### SITUATIONAL UPDATES

**SUDAN SITUATION:** Since the onset of fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in April 2023 the conflict has escalated into the largest displacement crisis globally, with over 12.3 million forced to flee. Of this, 8.8 million are displaced internally and 3.2 million in neighbouring countries. As of 31 December, the new arrivals into Egypt were 1.2 million, nearly 934,000 in South Sudan, 723,000 in Chad, 210,000 in Libya, 67,700 in Ethiopia, nearly 62,000 in Uganda and 36,200 in the Central Africa Republic. The latest figures are available [here](#).

The conflict has resulted in extreme violence and widespread human rights violations against civilians, including sexual violence, torture, extortion and targeting of ethnic groups. Clashes continued to spread across the country, forcing some 343,000 people to be internally displaced from Al Jazirah State since October 2024 and more than 100,000 new arrivals to South Sudan from late November through December 2024 due to an escalation in fighting in Sudan's Blue Nile, White Nile and Sennar States. This escalation has led to a surge of returnees and refugees into Renk County of Upper Nile State in **South Sudan** with some of the new arrivals settling along the main road between Renk town and Joda border and others hosted at the Joda Reception Centre. The capacity to adequately conduct health and nutrition screening for the new arrivals into South Sudan has been constrained. In both Sudan and South Sudan, the flooding and sporadic food supply due to pipeline breaks further increased the risk of malnutrition, especially among children and women. Recurring flooding incidences also reportedly caused an increase in cholera cases among both IDPs and refugees in several locations in both countries.

In **Sudan**, the pending 2022-2023 school year examinations commenced on 28 December in ten States, (Kassala, Gedaref, Red Sea, Blue Nile, White Nile, River Nile, Northern, North Kordofan, Sinaar and South Kordofan States). Another round of exams is scheduled for March 2025, providing an opportunity for students who missed the current round to participate. Examinations were however not conducted in eight states including Darfur, West Kordofan, Al Jazirah and Khartoum. UNHCR has coordinated with the State Ministry of Education to allow refugee students to participate in the exams in countries of asylum.

UNHCR and partners ensured essential non-food items (NFIs), and protection services were available. Legal assistance continues to be provided to individuals who lost their civil documentation while fleeing as well as multi-sectoral support, including protection monitoring, child protection services, gender-based violence (GBV) support, mental health and psychosocial counselling, and water,

<sup>1</sup> IDPs figure in Ethiopia has dropped from 4.4 M to 3.3 million after the directive from the government to use the existing DTM figure (Round 36) which is less by 1.1 million.

sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance to address the needs of vulnerable populations. UNHCR partners also conducted awareness campaigns on unexploded ordnance risk for IDPs, refugees, and the host community.

In **Egypt**, individuals have been obtaining registration appointments through UNHCR's Infoline and since the start of the conflict; a total of 565,250 individuals have scheduled appointments. As of 7 December, UNHCR conducted vulnerability assessments for over 126,000 newly arrived Sudanese individuals since the onset of the crisis. In November and December over 32,000 of these individuals received Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) while over 72,000 individuals in highly vulnerable situations remain on the MPCA waiting list. UNHCR and partners continue to provide legal counsel on early and late birth registration, filing legal reports and legal representation to the individuals fleeing the conflict in Sudan.

The Sudanese refugee-hosting areas of Vakaga, Bamingui-Bangoran, Haute Kotto, Ouaka, Mbomou, and Haute Mbomou in the **Central African Republic (CAR)** remained highly volatile due to the presence of non-state armed groups, with reports of ongoing human rights abuses. UNHCR's partner INTERSOS conducted monitoring visits including in the host community of Birao and Korsi. These visits facilitated security assessment and documentation of protection incidents, follow-up on previous cases and registration of new GBV cases, coaching and support for community volunteers as well as awareness-raising campaigns on human rights.

In December the World Food Programme (WFP), in collaboration with the Central African Institute for Statistics and Economic and Social Studies (Institut Centrafricain des statistiques et des études économiques et sociales—ICASEES), evaluated dry food and cash distributions among Sudanese refugees and community leaders. This evaluation aims to strengthen distribution for 2025. The majority of refugees, especially mothers with children, expressed their preference for the exclusive distribution of dry food rather than cash.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan has led to a continuous influx of Sudanese refugees into **Chad**, exacerbating an already critical humanitarian situation. Over 723,539 new arrivals were documented by 31 December 2024, in addition to the existing 407,000 Sudanese refugee caseload from previous conflicts. The influx has strained Chad's resources, causing shortages in food, water, medicine, and fuel, disrupting supply chains, and affecting refugees and vulnerable Chadian communities. The Government of Chad continued to implement the principle of non-refoulement by welcoming the new Sudanese refugees into its territory.

A high-level delegation from UNHCR and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) visited Farchana from 19 to 20 November and Abeche on 21 November to advance empowerment and sustainable development initiatives for local and refugee communities. The joint mission also explored funding opportunities for small industrial units to boost economic self-reliance.

The security situation in the Amhara region in **Ethiopia** remained volatile but allowed humanitarian operations to continue with improved access following the reopening of the Gondar-Metema highway. While clashes between the armed group and the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) were limited, some movement of the armed group was observed near the Metema Transit Centre. In the Benishangul Gumuz region, the security situation in Kurmuk Transit Centre, Ura, and Sherhole refugee sites remained unpredictable, posing operational challenges. UNHCR in coordination with Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) and other partners, facilitated the relocation of refugees from the Kurmuk Transit Centre to Ura refugee site.

The needs in eastern **Libya** continued to grow with the continuous arrival of Sudanese refugees. Critical gaps persisted in health, WASH, cash, food, and shelter services. Many refugees arrived in poor health conditions, requiring urgent medical and nutritional support. Overstretched WASH infrastructure increased the risks of disease outbreaks, thus an urgent need for expanded access to clean water and sanitation services. Local authorities continue to play a key role in providing access to public health services and enabling refugee children to enrol in schools. However, as refugees continued to move towards coastal cities, sustained support for host communities across the country has remained crucial, particularly tailored protection measures for female-headed households.

In **Uganda**, prima facie recognition for Sudanese asylum seekers remains in force. Sudanese account for the largest number of arrivals in 2024. This influx has severely strained facilities and resources in Uganda, with overcrowding at transit centers, inadequate water supply, and sanitation challenges. Overcrowded classrooms and insufficient teaching capacity in Kiryandongo are hampering access to quality education, further exacerbated by long travel distances for new arrivals.

UNHCR continues to strengthen the multi-sectoral response, in close coordination with the authorities and partners, expand and improve reception and operational capacity in Central Africa Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya, South Sudan and Uganda while enhancing the IDP response inside Sudan. The Level 3 emergency declaration for Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan was extended for another 3 months ending on 19 February 2025.

On 15 October in Geneva, a [side event](#) on the Sudan Regional Refugee Crisis was held during UNHCR's annual Executive Committee meeting. The event highlighted the vital role of development actors in strengthening the response to this crisis. It underscored the necessity of implementing development interventions at the outset to complement the urgent need for immediate lifesaving support for people fleeing Sudan. UNHCR's Regional Refugee Coordinator (RRC) described the Sudan situation as a protection crisis, humanitarian emergency, and development catastrophe that is impeding regional development and threatening instability. The RRC stressed the importance of changing how the international community responds to emergencies, emphasizing resilience, inclusion, and self-reliance. The event concluded by thanking host countries for keeping their borders open and urging donor countries to increase funding for the Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) and integrate refugee hosting areas into broader development programmes. The video showcased at the event can be accessed [here](#).

**SOUTH SUDAN SITUATION:** By the end of 2024, countries in the EHAGL region were host to 2.2 million South Sudanese refugees. The majority are hosted in Uganda (43 per cent) while 27 per cent are hosted in Sudan, 18.9 per cent in Ethiopia, 8.5 per cent in Kenya and 2.4 per cent in DRC.

Conflict, climate disasters and intense socio-economic pressures, continue to displace thousands of people in South Sudan, contributing to continued refugee outflows, with the majority seeking asylum in Uganda, where 30,786 new arrivals were received in 2024, and others displaced internally.

More than one million people have arrived in South Sudan since the start of the Sudan conflict. Whereas more than two-thirds are South Sudanese arrivals, many of them have never lived in South Sudan and are arriving in a country that is reeling from the economic impact of the conflict in Sudan. This one million people represent an increase of 9 per cent of the total population in South Sudan, adding to socio-economic pressures that have flared up following the closure of the oil pipeline that provided a percentage of national revenue.

**BURUNDI SITUATION:** By the end of 2024, countries in the EHAGL region were host to 318,000 Burundi refugees.

A Tripartite meeting with the Government of Tanzania, Burundi and UNHCR was held in December 2024, whose primary outcomes were to pursue the promotion of returns in 2025, accelerate comprehensive durable solutions including resettlement, and conduct comprehensive protection and solutions assessments for all Burundian refugees. UNHCR continues to work with various stakeholders, including development actors and the Government of Burundi, to strengthen conditions for refugee returns, with just over 20,000 returnees assisted in 2024. Efforts include ensuring legal, physical, and material safety for voluntary returnees and promoting sustainable reintegration.

Adverse weather conditions in 2024 led to flooding in parts of Burundi and the rising inflation rates increased the market prices of basic commodities which especially impacted purchasing power with the cash assistance provided to returnees.

**SOMALIA SITUATION:** By the end of 2024, countries in the EHAGL region were host to 933,000 Somali refugees.

The situation of internally displaced people in Somalia is complex with conflict, environmental challenges, fragile social protection mechanisms and socio-economic instability compounding the situation. In 2024, approximately 3.9 million individuals were displaced due to ongoing internal violence and recurring natural disasters. Somalia also continues to host some 42,000 refugees mainly from Ethiopia and Yemen, while 933,000 Somali refugees remain in the region. Widespread humanitarian needs have consequently ensued, with many IDPs lacking access to basic services such as food, healthcare and education.

## COUNTRY UPDATES

**BURUNDI:** As of 31 December, Burundi was a host to 89,000 refugees and 2,100 asylum seekers. There were also 254,100 assisted Burundian refugee returnees, 7,900 internally displaced persons, and 800 individuals at risk of statelessness.

The Government of Burundi achieved a historic milestone in November 2024 with the validation of its first-ever national land policy since independence. This policy was developed through extensive stakeholder consultations led by the government in partnership with IOM and partners. This foundational policy will strengthen land tenure security and promote sustainable development, with particular attention to the needs of returnees and displacement-affected communities, marking a crucial step towards addressing long-standing land governance challenges.

As part of the Merankabandi social protection project, the World Food Programme (WFP) launched awareness-raising sessions in refugee camps in November 2024 to extend its assistance to Congolese refugees, targeting 8,000 households in the five camps. The project will provide each beneficiary family with a mobile phone and SIM card and USD 20 every two months for a period of 24 months.

Burundi is stepping up efforts to integrate newly arrived refugees directly into its national education system. With the five existing refugee camps operating at full capacity, the construction of a new site in Musenyi, Giharo Commune, Rutana Province, begun in April 2024 to accommodate up to 10,000 refugees. As of 30 November, the Musenyi site hosted 2,128 refugees (606 households). Unlike the traditional refugee camps which deliver education through the country-of-origin system, the site fosters integration by enabling refugees to attend Burundian public schools alongside host communities.

**DJIBOUTI:** As of 31 December 2024, Djibouti was host to 33,000 refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from Somalia, Ethiopia, Yemen and Eritrea.

On 16 December, UNHCR in collaboration with Djibouti's Ministry of Health launched a three-day training for twelve medical practitioners working in Ali Sabieh. The training enhanced the knowledge and management capacity of medical practitioners on multi-drug-resistant diseases and community-based epidemiological surveillance with a view to improving population health in refugee hosting areas. The Ali Sabieh region hosts over 17,000 refugees.

UNHCR in collaboration with the National Union for Djiboutian Women (UNFD) launched the UNiTE 16-days of activism campaign against GBV from 25 November to 10 December. The campaign launch was held in Markazi refugee village in the presence of government representatives, UN agencies, refugees and partners, with an agreement on active collaboration to promote women's

empowerment and strengthen local initiatives. For their commitment and active role in the transformation of their communities, UNHCR issued recognition certificates to refugee committees that support the fight against GBV.

On 10 November 2024, the Djibouti government through its National Agency for People Living with Disability (ANPH) began the enrolment of refugees living with disabilities into the national system. UNHCR's supervisory role in the exercise ensures that refugees are informed about this exercise, to guarantee the collection of accurate quality data. At the end of the enrolment exercise, all registered refugees will be granted a mobility inclusion card that will grant them equal access to special treatment, and ease access to services and economic opportunities anywhere in Djibouti. The exercise started in Djibouti city and will continue in all three refugee villages. UNHCR is in talks with ANPH on strengthening access to education and employment for refugees living with a disability.

The rainy season in Djibouti caused flooding in Markazi, a region that hosts over 2,400 refugees. The floods destroyed shelters and other significant damages that compelled about 73 refugee households to relocate. UNHCR in collaboration with local authorities and partners provided a well-coordinated response, and the Djibouti government through its Obock prefecture commenced the construction of water channels in Markazi refugee village. These channels were recommended as a way of preventing flooding and protect refugees especially the Eritrean community that is the most exposed to flooding.

**ETHIOPIA:** As of 31 December, Ethiopia hosted 1.1 million refugees and asylum seekers mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan. By the end of 2024, over 26,000 new refugees and asylum seekers had arrived in Ethiopia, bringing the number of people in need of protection arriving from Sudan to nearly 68,000 since April 2023. Along with partners, UNHCR is providing protection counselling, healthcare, and lifesaving humanitarian assistance to new arrivals in need of international protection. UNHCR continues to support and advocate with the Government of Ethiopia, for the full resumption of registration across the country.

UNHCR and the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) are currently conducting verification and documentation exercises in six locations across Ethiopia. So far, a total of 65,521 refugees have agreed to participate in the National Digital Identification (ID) Program. RRS and UNHCR have successfully assisted 24,898 refugees in obtaining refugee ID cards with Fayda numbers. Additionally, 35,086 refugees have been issued Fayda ID numbers through their Proof of Registration (POR) documents. In Tigray, over 29,300 IDPs (94 per cent) have successfully received their physical ID cards following the completion of their registration into the National Fayda Program.

Following a relatively stable security situation in the Amhara region, the verification and documentation exercise by UNHCR resumed to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers are provided with identity documents upon verification. In Ura, Benishangul Gumuz, preparations are ongoing for the exercise scheduled to begin in January 2025. However, the planned timeline has been impacted by delays in completing the construction of the registration center.

In November, UNHCR conducted a joint detention monitoring with RRS to help secure the release of hundreds of urban refugees and asylum seekers from detention. USD 1.6 million in multipurpose cash assistance was provided to approximately 5,300 most vulnerable urban refugees to cover their basic needs. As of November 2024, 49 refugees have received their work permits and 1,444 have been issued with residence permits.

In 2024, nutrition partners treated 49,399 children under five and cured 34,592 at the Community Management of Acute Malnutrition programs run at 41 functional nutrition centers. Additionally, 64,859 children under five and 16,217 pregnant and lactating women were admitted to the Blanket Supplementary Feeding programs to support their increased nutritional needs. The 2024 countrywide Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) conducted in 23 out of 24 planned camps and sites indicates that 1 out of 2 refugee children under five in Ethiopia, is undernourished (low weight-to-height ratio, low height-for-age, underweight and/or micronutrient deficient). 14 per cent of refugees across sites in Ethiopia also suffer from Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM), a high level according to WHO classification and below the UNHCR target of <10 per cent. This can be attributed inadequate access to health, shelter, WASH and livelihood services.

WFP continues to provide in-kind food assistance to refugees, with 60 per cent of the recommended dietary allowance. In 2024, WFP scaled up digital cash assistance programs from Jijiga to include Benishangul Gumuz and Afar to improve refugee food choices and enhancing food value chains for refugee and host communities, 93 per cent of planned individuals (912,087) received their rations with a moving average of 76 per cent in 2024. However, the food basket is macro in nature and does not meet a healthy dietary approach to food security and nutrition.

Countrywide, over 177,000 refugees (44 per cent girls) have registered and enrolled in pre-primary (28 per cent), primary (58 per cent) and secondary school (1 per cent). Over 4,700 refugees and 1,600 host community persons received capacity-building training on crop production and livestock raising, small enterprises/petty business, and financial services.

Refugees accessed primary health care services and referrals to secondary and tertiary health facilities across all locations, resulting in a cumulative total of approximately 550,000 consultations in 2024. The leading cause of these medical consultations was respiratory tract infections followed by malaria. In December, 91 per cent of the births were attended to by skilled healthcare workers resulting in a cumulative total of approximately over 7,000 skilled-attended deliveries since January 2024. Refugees also accessed family planning services and in October a cumulative total of 20,208 individuals had received these services since January.

UNHCR in collaboration with RRS and the International Labor Organization (ILO) organized a high-level technical dialogue on community-based health insurance (CBHI). The forum endorsed a technical working group that will facilitate the steps required to enroll refugees in Addis Ababa into the CBHI scheme on a pilot basis.

In November, the Ethiopian government, through RRS held a series of consultative engagements on the proposed Makatet Roadmap implementation plan, to establish a conducive platform for implementing the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) pledges. To ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach, the engagements were held with refugees, government representatives from refugee-hosting regions, federal line ministries, non-state actors, including NGOs, civil society organizations, and private sector stakeholders. The Makatet Strategy is a multi-year plan that aims to improve the lives of refugees and host communities, based on commitments made by the Ethiopian government at the 2019 and 2023 Global Refugee Forums. The word "Makatet" means "inclusion" in Amharic. The Makatet Strategy is set to be launched in March 2025.

**KENYA:** As of 31 December, Kenya was host to 824,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers including over 416,400 in Dadaab, 298,000 in the Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement and nearly 109,500 in urban areas.

In October, UNHCR released a policy brief to understand the impact of obtaining citizenship for formerly stateless populations, studying the Shona community in Kenya. The findings indicate that 86 per cent of respondents now have access to documentation, and a notable increase in accessing bank accounts (from 9 to 35 per cent). Nearly all households now have access to a mobile wallet. Four out of ten Shona households now perceive their household income has increased, and five out of ten households' income has stabilized since gaining citizenship. The policy brief was released to coincide with the 10-year anniversary of the #IBelong campaign to eradicate statelessness. The policy brief can be found [here](#).



Kenya. International Day of Persons Living with Disability. © UNHCR/Mohamed Maalim

The [UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework \(UNSDCF\)](#) has been officially approved for one year, bringing it into full alignment with the constitutional duration of the current government and Kenya's [Medium-Term Plan \(MTP IV\)](#). In October, the Resident Coordinator made a written submission to the Development Coordination Office (DCO) requesting for the extension of the UNSDCF to 2027. The initial UNSDCF, with a total budget of USD 2.2 billion, was signed with the government in 2022 and was set to expire in June 2026.

UNHCR participated in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) Nutrition Joint Program signing ceremony that took place in Nairobi on 26 November. This is one of several Joint Programmes under the UNSCDF and was developed through the joint effort of five UN agencies (UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, FAO, and WHO), the government, civil society groups, Youth and Leave No One Behind groups, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and the private sector.

In November, UNHCR's Goodwill Ambassador Karen Wazen and Supporter Tracy Harmoush were welcomed in Kakuma Municipality where they met with refugee artisans from the MADE51 initiative, to understand how their products support women's livelihoods and self-reliance as well as to explore future collaborations. The Goodwill Ambassadors visited I-Connect, a refugee youth-led project

and social enterprise that links refugee artisans with markets across the region. They also met with a refugee family pioneering the adoption of clean energy cooking in Kalobeyei, to learn about sustainable solutions that are empowering refugees to fight climate change.

**RWANDA:** As of 31 December, Rwanda hosted some 129,000 refugees and asylum-seekers mainly from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi.

UNHCR has observed an increase in the number of Sudanese asylum seekers fleeing to Rwanda. As of 31 October, 743 Sudanese were recorded as arriving in Rwanda in 2024. This includes 330 individuals (161 families) in Kigali and 413 individuals (222 families) in Mahama refugee camp. The Sudanese community in Mahama and Kigali continue to face several challenges, including language barriers, difficulties in accessing education for their children, lack of livelihoods opportunities, and issues with healthcare access.

In Rwanda, refugee students are primarily integrated into the national education system and the schools located in refugee camps have been progressively registered as public institutions by the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC). Following the new [Ministerial instructions](#) guiding the application modalities, UNHCR successfully submitted the application requesting three Kiziba schools to be registered as public schools for the Government to take over their full management, by allocating teachers and all financial support to run the schools. The outcome is expected by July 2025, marking the beginning of the financial year of the Government of Rwanda.

In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, the Government of Rwanda registered a new health pledge to enroll all refugees into the National Health Insurance Scheme. UNHCR is currently managing eight camp-based health care facilities in Rwanda in cooperation with Save the Children (SCI) and Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) at the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM). The health centers offer a broad range of primary health care services, including laboratory tests and vaccinations. The Rwandan host community also have access to these health facilities free of charge. UNHCR is currently only able to support the referrals of refugees to secondary and tertiary healthcare in emergency or lifesaving cases. Other refugees in need of elective healthcare including routine or minor surgeries have been placed on a waiting list.

**SOMALIA:** Nearly 4 million people are internally displaced in Somalia due to conflict, insecurity, and the effects of climate change, such as cyclical droughts and floods. Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers (74 per cent) reside in urban or peri-urban settings mainly in the Woqooyi Galbeed, Bari, Nugaal, Mudug and Banadir regions, in the north (predominantly) and southern Somalia to a lesser extent. In addition, Somalia hosts close to 42,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Ethiopia, Yemen and Syria.

Since December 2014, cumulatively, 140,350 refugees have returned to Somalia from countries of asylum, mostly Kenya and Yemen – with UNHCR directly assisting 96,186 individuals primarily through the Voluntary Repatriation Programme from Kenya and the Assisted Spontaneous Returns (ASR) Programme from Yemen. Another 44,164 Somalis arrived spontaneously.

UNHCR continued to operate in a highly complex and volatile environment characterized by insecurity due to armed conflict, indiscriminate attacks by non-state armed groups, violent clan clashes, political tension, and climate change. The humanitarian crisis in Somalia is severe. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 5.98 million people in Somalia needed humanitarian assistance in 2024. Recurrent shocks, including climatic events, conflict, insecurity, and disease outbreaks, continue to exacerbate needs. About 4.4 million people (23 percent of the population) were acutely food insecure in December, due to below-average rains, rapid depletion of food stocks and malnutrition rates among children under five remained high<sup>2</sup>.

Throughout 2024, the Shelter Cluster partners supported by twenty-five active organizations collaborated in delivering critical shelter and non-food items (NFI) support to 1,006,568 individuals, (169,538 households). This support has been vital in addressing the urgent shelter needs of displaced populations, ensuring vulnerable families have access to safe, secure, and dignified living conditions. Interventions have included the distribution of shelter materials, construction of both temporary and durable shelters, and provision of essential household items, to facilitate the recovery and stabilization of forcibly displaced families. These efforts are integral to helping communities rebuild their lives, restore their dignity, and regain stability in challenging environments.

Sports for protection activities were organized across all regions in Somaliland. The primary objectives of these activities are to foster social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among the population we serve and host community members. The aim is to create a harmonious and inclusive community where all members – refugees, IDPs, host community members, and returnees – can live together in mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation. The activities include sports activities for children, marathon, football tournaments, women's football and volleyball, and sports activities for persons with disabilities.

<sup>2</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-2024-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-hnrrp-summary>



South Sudan. Renk remains the epicentre of the response, hosting approximately 14,000 individuals (including new arrivals) in its transit centres as of mid-October. © UNHCR/Reason Moses Runyanga

**SOUTH SUDAN:** As of 31 December 2024, South Sudan hosted 517,000 refugees and asylum seekers. Another 1.8 million South Sudanese are internally displaced.

Since the start of the Sudan emergency, South Sudan has received over 930,000 new arrivals. Most arrivals, (over 683,900) are South Sudanese nationals returning home. UNHCR has scaled up its response to the ongoing Sudan emergency by establishing transit centres and monitoring border points to provide urgent humanitarian aid. Other new arrivals include Sudanese refugees and third-country nationals. In addition, UNHCR continues to support nearly two million people internally displaced by the legacy of civil war, sub-national conflict and four years of consecutive flooding/climate shocks.

The escalation of fighting in Sudan's White Nile, Sennar, and Blue Nile states has led to a surge of new arrivals into South Sudan. While most returnees and refugees previously had entered through the Joda border, an increasing number are now crossing via informal routes east of Renk — which are remote and hard to reach. The insecurity near Sudan's Joda border led to intermittent border closures, disrupting crossings and humanitarian partners temporarily paused operations at Joda on 8 and 9 December due to heightened security risks. In response to the influx, humanitarian partners completed rapid inter-agency assessments and scaled up protection and assistance efforts.

UNHCR continued to respond and monitor the cholera situation across new-arrival hosting locations. Since the Ministry of Health's Cholera outbreak declaration, over 17,000 cases have been reported with 254 confirmed deaths. The epicenter of the outbreak shifted to Rubkona and Bentiu town - a hub for returnee arrivals from Sudan. In Renk North, an Oral Cholera Vaccine campaign which included the treatment centres was successfully conducted. A total of 52,522 out of the target population of 55,588 (12 months and older, including refugees and returnees) received the six-month vaccine, achieving a 94.5 per cent coverage rate.

The [Rapid Intention Survey](#) conducted at the Wunthou-Joda border on 27 – 28 December indicates that in the short term both refugees and returnees prefer to remain in South Sudan, while 35 per cent of refugees and 6 per cent of returnees intend to return to Sudan. In the mid-term, the preference for integration in South Sudan grows, with 32 per cent of refugees and 6 per cent of returnees intending to return to Sudan, while 30 per cent of returnees' plan to stay at their current location.

In December the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) facilitated a **National Dialogue on Teacher Professional Development for Quality Education**. The workshop is in line with the IGAD's Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (ESTI) program, which endeavours to address educational issues at regional and national levels by undertaking a strategic



intervention to support member states in the sector. The objectives of the national consultation on teacher training were to create a common understanding of the importance of continuous professional development at all levels within the country, agree on modalities of the teacher training program and mobilize the support of national partners and stakeholders on teacher training.

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MoHEST) and other line ministries, in partnership with UNESCO, UNHCR, IGAD, East Africa Community (EAC), NGOs are working towards developing a national qualifications framework for the Republic of South Sudan.

**SUDAN:** Sudan has historically hosted one of the largest refugee populations in Africa with close to 838,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, many of whom have faced multiple displacements due to the conflict. Most of these refugees are from South Sudan (73.2 per cent), followed by Eritrea (15.8 per cent), Ethiopia (8.3 per cent). Among refugees, nearly 267,000 self-relocated to safer areas within Sudan. Despite the conflict, Sudan remains a welcoming country of asylum, with 11,718 new arrivals in 2024, mainly from Eritrea, Ethiopia and South Sudan. 69 per cent of the refugees are accommodated in camps, while the remaining 31 per cent live outside of these facilities.

Throughout October, community-based protection networks (CBPN) and key informants in the Darfur region reported incidents of farm destruction and impeded access to farmland which has led to disputes between nomadic pastoralists and local farmers and severely affected the food security and civilian protection situation. In West Kordofan State, to address disputes during the harvest season, authorities in El Nuhud formed a legal committee chaired by the senior prosecutor, which is expected to address disputes between refugees and local host community farmers.

Further, CBPNs in North Darfur State reported a lack of safe passage for civilians from areas of active fighting and continued incidents of violence, including cases of rape. CBPNs comprising members in Otash, Deriag, and Gerida IDP camps in South Darfur received refresher trainings on case identification, referral pathways, and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Through UNHCR's cross-border operation, two convoys from Farchana, Chad, transported a total of 1,800 NFI kits into Sudan, through the Adre border. On 11 December, a convoy of five trucks delivered 1,000 NFI kits to Beleil, South Darfur, while on 12 December, another convoy of three trucks delivered 800 NFI kits to Beida, West Darfur. Since the start of the cross-border operation in August 2023, a total of 27,150 NFI kits have been received at the Farchana warehouse, with 25,150 kits already dispatched to Darfur states, providing critical support to displaced families affected by the ongoing conflict.

Sudan remains in a severe humanitarian crisis marked by pervasive malnutrition, displacement, and disease outbreaks. According to an OCHA [report](#) from 1 October, Sudan ranks among the top four countries globally for the highest rates of global acute malnutrition (GAM), impacting 13.6 percent of its population. In certain areas like North Darfur, GAM rates have exceeded 30 percent, surpassing famine thresholds. Additionally, the country is contending with outbreaks of cholera, malaria, and dengue fever, which are further aggravated by the devastation of health infrastructure, with 70 to 80 percent of health facilities in conflict zones nearly non-functional.

In line with the Government of Sudan's pledges at the Global Refugees Forum, and strategic priorities at the country level, collaborative efforts and strategic advocacy with national authorities remain a top priority to ensure the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in critical national services such as health, education, livelihoods, and development programs, while also fostering conditions for voluntary and sustainable returns where feasible.

Approximately 20 per cent of schools have reopened. However, they face significant challenges, including damaged infrastructure, non-payment of teachers and reduced instructional time due to alternating school days for boys and girls. Refugees in Sudan, while a relatively small minority (refugee school-age population is approximately 415,000), share many of the same challenges as internally displaced persons and host community members.

The Sudan Local Education Group under UNESCO's leadership is developing a Transitional Education Plan (TEP) for 2025 – 2027 to serve as a strategic roadmap, aligning investments to maximize impact. The TEP aims to address the immediate humanitarian needs while acting as a bridge to long-term development planning.

**TANZANIA:** By the end of December, Tanzania was hosting over 230,600 refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from Burundi (62.6 per cent) and the DRC (37.1 per cent).

From 17 - 19 December the 29th Technical Working Group meeting and 25<sup>th</sup> Tripartite Commission meeting on the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees living in Tanzania took place in Bujumbura. The main takeaway of the Tripartite meeting was the agreement by all parties to continue the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees in Tanzania and implementing additional activities to scale up the promotional phase of voluntary repatriation, which is to be reviewed within one year. In addition, UNHCR agreed to support the Government of Tanzania in undertaking comprehensive protection and solutions-based assessments in 2025 that aim, among others, to review the profiles of the remaining Burundian refugee population in Tanzania and identify appropriate durable solutions, through an inclusive process.

From 23 - 25 September 2024, UNHCR organized a three-day meeting of key stakeholders on statelessness in the region in Dar es Salaam. The meeting brought together thirty-six participants from governments, civil society organizations, UN Agencies, and representatives of the affected population from seven countries (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, and Tanzania). The main objective of the meeting was to review and discuss the achievements and progress made so far to eradicate statelessness. Key takeaways included countries committing to accede to the two Conventions on Statelessness, countries committing to improve their

registration systems and issuance of civil documents to minimize risks of statelessness, and continuous collaboration between States and other partners including UN Agencies and Civil Society Organizations.



Uganda - Refugees Arriving in Uganda. © UNHCR/Emmanuel Museruka

**UGANDA:** By the end of December, Uganda was hosting over 1.8 million refugees and asylum seekers. New arrivals have continued to enter the country mainly from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and South Sudan.

UNHCR works closely with the Ugandan Government under the Multi-Partner Protection and Solutions Strategy (MYMPSS) 2021-2025 to safeguard refugees and asylum-seekers. Uganda's asylum policy is notably flexible, with refugees from DRC, South Sudan and Sudan granted *prima facie* recognition upon entry, while others undergo refugee status determination (RSD) managed by the government with UNHCR's advisory support. However, for the nationalities that require RSD to be conducted, insufficient resources for RSD staffing resulted in a significant backlog of asylum seekers. Advocacy for resuming Somali asylum admissions is still ongoing.

There was a surge in South Sudanese new arrivals in December, in the Adjumani and Arua sub-office areas of responsibility following heavy gunfire in Juba, South Sudan. The Sub Offices recorded a significant increase in new arrivals, driven by heightened insecurity and increased criminal activities across the border. Additionally, some arrivals indicated intentions to reunite with family in Uganda during the festive season, mirroring patterns observed in late 2023.

As of 13 December 2024, Uganda had 1,027 confirmed cases of Mpox since the outbreak began in July 2024. Of these, 906 recoveries were recorded, 115 were admitted and six fatalities were recorded. Seven refugees who tested positive received treatment and recovered. Partners continue Mpox surveillance, with a particular focus on new arrivals.

## REGIONAL UPDATES

### Development Partnerships and Fundraising

The [Regional Economic Inclusion Workgroup](#) held a virtual session in October on the role of Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs) in data and practices, with discussions on successes and challenges facing RLOs in promoting refugees' livelihoods and in fostering Socio-Economic Development and Community Resilience. Speakers highlighted the [challenges facing RLOs in promoting refugees' livelihoods](#), with examples of successes made by the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) in [shaping solutions for refugees and displaced persons](#) under the Mastercard Foundation's DREEM project as well as the work of [Unidos Social Innovation Centre](#) (UNIDOS) in Uganda.

Following consultative discussions held earlier in August 2024, organised by the IGAD Secretariat through the IGAD Support Platform on Forced Displacement and bringing together refugee groups, refugee-led organizations, stakeholders from the IGAD region including the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (REDSS,) OXFAM, and UNHCR - **the IGAD Regional Refugee Engagement Forum (IGAD-REF)** was successfully launched on 27 November at a two-day workshop in Kampala, Uganda. The regional platform for refugee voices will be integrated in regional policies and programs, addressing the critical gaps that have persisted in the involvement of refugees in shaping responses to their needs.

UNHCR EHAGL Regional Bureau and the World Bank held the first **situational approach deep-dive** on 27 November. The joint meeting brought together over fifty participants from headquarters, Regional Bureaux, and country operations responding to the Sudan crisis (CAR, Chad, Ethiopia, Egypt, South Sudan, and Uganda). The dedicated session discussed the dire situation in Sudan, and both organizations emphasized the importance of a coordinated approach to address the humanitarian and development needs of refugees, internally displaced populations and host communities.

EAC, IGAD and UNHCR held a regional high-level workshop on enhancing the **Investment Climate for Refugee, Returnee and Host Community Economic Empowerment** in Nairobi from 19 – 21 November. The workshop involved senior leaders from public and private sectors, host governments, and development actors to shape policy reforms and priority investments to advance regional economic and financial inclusion. The workshop culminated in a catalytic programme to enhance the understanding of the key barriers to investment climate faced by forcibly displaced communities in refugee-hosting and return areas across nine countries in the region. The event featured engaging multi-stakeholder deliberations, which concluded with an adopted action plan detailing eight priority actions - policy and regulatory frameworks, infrastructure development, private sector development, financial inclusion, skills development, agriculture and value chain development, regional integration and cross-border trade and gender mainstreaming. These actions will be undertaken nationally and regionally over five years to improve the investment climate in refugee-hosting areas and attract private sector engagement to economically empower forcibly displaced communities.

The fourth quarterly informal briefing on the **Global Compact on Refugees** held on 2 December focused on **Solutions**. Representing two regional multi-stakeholder pledges made under the auspices of the IGAD Support Platform, Madam Fathia Alwan, Director for Health and Social Development of IGAD, highlighted IGAD's efforts in delivering solutions for forcibly displaced populations. The Director noted the importance of peacebuilding and addressing the root causes of displacement and provided updates on initiatives in South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. IGAD launched the National Durable Solution Strategy and revised Action Plan for South Sudan, supported the socio-economic inclusion of refugees in Ethiopia, and rehabilitated vocational colleges in Djibouti. IGAD also launched the Refugee Engagement Forum to promote meaningful refugee participation and addressed climate change impacts through initiatives such as the development of standard operating procedures for cross-border disaster displacement, modelling displacement risks due to climate change and revising National Adaptation Plans to include human mobility. IGAD emphasized the need for pledge matching in the spirit of burden and responsibility sharing, given increasing displacement in the region. Uganda, speaking on Peacebuilding and Solutions, emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of displacement and supporting peace processes and highlighted the need for international support and funding for peace efforts. Similar calls were made by Kenya and Ethiopia. The discussions, both in recording and the summary notes, as well as the presentations of the Briefings that took place in 2024 can be found [here](#).

### Inter-Agency Coordination

The South Sudan Situation Emergency Training was held between 29 to 31 October where UNHCR and partners were trained on the Refugee Response Plans - building regional capacities to prepare, coordinate, and respond to an escalating humanitarian crisis scenario in South Sudan.

An inter-agency donor briefing was held on 27 November to update the Sudan regional refugee response plan for 2024; and provide a preview of 2025 planning figures. The donor briefing attended by donors, UN, and INGO partners across the seven countries involved in the response highlighted the achievements and sustainable responses in gender-based violence, localization, health and nutrition, livelihoods and economic inclusion, and the establishment of integrated settlements. The Sudan regional refugee response was 31 per cent funded in 2024.

UNDP and UNHCR held online discussions on partnership with a focus on four countries: Somalia, Burundi, Uganda, and Ethiopia to evaluate common areas of intervention between the two agencies in line with the joint collaborative framework of 2023 – 2024. As an outcome of the country discussions, Somalia held a joint consultative workshop on 10 December, with a focus on implementing a joint project in Galkayo Somalia in 2025, with a focus on durable solutions for IDPs.

With support from the Regional Bureau and inputs from selected countries in the region, draft localization guidelines have been developed by headquarters. The draft guidelines are due for field testing and input from staff who were involved in providing input in 2024. In the region, more than 1000 organizations have self-mapped into the global platform, with 50 refugee-led organizations in the region already receiving grants from UNHCR.

In December 2024, the theme for the NGO consultations in 2025 and beyond was confirmed by the High Commissioner as "*Protecting the Right to Safety and Dignity: access to asylum, Internal Displacement, and Returns*". This aims at linking Access to Asylum and International Protection with the Protection of IDPs and returnees to address shared challenges across forced displacement.

### Resettlement

By the end of December 2024, EHAGL operations had submitted almost **34,000 refugees to 13 different resettlement countries**, exceeding the overall regional target for 2024. At least 29,260 refugees submitted by UNHCR in 2024, and previous years were

effectively resettled between January and December through UNHCR programs in the EHAGL region, with 75 per cent departing to the United States, 11 per cent to Canada, 3 per cent to Australia and 3 per cent to Sweden. Country operations in EHAGL continued to make progress in reviewing resettlement cases with one or more individuals requiring an adjudication of their identity in Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS), work critical to ensure the integrity of resettlement programming. Country operations also continued their work updating resettlement cases in proGres to improve the overall accuracy of resettlement data for the region.

### Complementary Pathways

Country operations continued to provide support to refugees in accessing **education pathway** programmes, including undergraduate and postgraduate scholarship programs in third countries including Italy (UNICORE), France (UNIV'R), Germany (LfA), Spain (UB), and Canada (WUSC), alongside programs such as EU-Passworld (Belgium), the Habesha/DIME project (Mexico), YTB (Türkiye), IGAD and DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) in-region scholarships, Welcome Corps on Campus (USA), and the Mastercard Foundation scholarships offered through thirteen partner universities within the region and overseas. Ongoing **labour mobility** programmes include Canada's employment mobility programme in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Tanzania, and similar but limited opportunities for refugee admission to the UK, Australia, and the USA based on employer sponsorship. Italy recently launched a labour mobility pathway for refugees in Uganda and candidate identification/profiling has commenced. The Durable Solutions Unit has facilitated engagement and advocacy with operational partners and talent platforms engaged in labour mobility (Talent Beyond Boundaries and TalentLift).

At the Regional Bureau, the Durable Solutions unit has continued to engage NGOs, universities, employers, and civil society actors including the diaspora of (former) refugees, the private sector, governments in both sending and receiving countries, key regional actors such as the East African Community (EAC), IGAD and International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the UN migration agency (IOM), and donors.

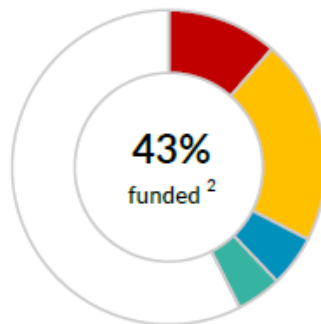
## Financial Information

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.



**\$ 2.209 billion**

UNHCR's financial requirements 2024 <sup>1</sup>



FUNDING UPDATE | 2024

**EAST HORN AND GREAT LAKES**  
 as of 31 December 2024

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

### 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 (43 per cent) and total funding amount (\$939,261,277) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$1,269,788,270 representing 57 per cent of the financial requirements.

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