UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES
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GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES

INDICATOR REPORT

A drawing by a 14-year-old Vietnamese refugee in Singapore, 1975-76. This drawing reflects the enduring hope of refugees for safety and dignity. Over the 75 years of UNHCR's work, that hope has remained unchanged — and so has UNHCR's commitment to protecting and supporting displaced and stateless people around the world. © UNHCR Archives Fonds 10c Children's Drawings (1970-2000)

Foreword

As we mark UNHCR's 75th anniversary, the organization faces an exceptionally complex landscape. Wars have become more violent. Humanitarian needs continue to multiply. People continue to flee conflict and persecution in record numbers — at latest count, 117 million remain forcibly displaced.

And yet what this report shows is that, despite strong and frequently clashing political currents, it is still possible for the international community to come together — as countries hosting refugees, as donors, as civil society organizations, as development partners, as the UN, as displaced people – around the foundational vision of responsibility-sharing and solidarity that underpins the Global Compact on Refugees. More than ever, the Global Compact on Refugees is proving, through the multistakeholder pledge process launched at the Global Refugee Forum 2023, to be a roadmap that can help us navigate these complex currents. Through a whole-of-society approach, we are better able to meet today's refugee protection and solutions challenges in a tangible, measurable way.

The findings of this report are both inspiring and sobering. We are seeing encouraging signs: support for refugees in low- and middle-income countries is growing, and local partnerships are becoming stronger. Many countries are adopting legal and policy reforms intended to help refugees access work, education, and essential services — key steps towards greater self-reliance, and to making responses to forced displacement more sustainable. And better data enables us to hold a clearer mirror to our collective response, marking achievements and identifying gaps.

But we have also learned that progress remains precarious. This year has seen a sharp decline in funding. In many cases, there is still an opportunity to better align available resources with actual needs. Support to national actors remains limited, even as local partnerships grow. Persistent barriers and widespread poverty still hinder self-reliance for nearly half of the refugee population, and available solutions fall far short of global needs. Hard-won improvements are at serious risk. We cannot afford to lose momentum or become complacent. We cannot afford to leave refugee-hosting countries alone to bear the responsibility to care for the world's forcibly displaced. Without renewed political will, sustained financing, and coherent multilateral cooperation, these pressures threaten to erode the very systems we have worked tirelessly to build.

As we look ahead to the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review in December 2025, it is essential to sustain momentum and to reaffirm our collective commitment to the principles outlined in the Global Compact on Refugees. Nobody should imagine any of this will be easy. But neither must we resign ourselves to fatalism.

As you read through this report, you will find artwork by refugee children — from the 1970s to more recent years. Powerful images that afford us a glimpse into the hopes and dreams of children who have been uprooted by conflict and persecution. It is striking how little those dreams have changed over time: the desire for safety, dignity, and the chance for a better future. This artwork serves as a reminder of what truly matters, and why we undertake this work — even when progress is slow, and setbacks occur.

The Global Refugee Forum Progress Review gives us an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to solidarity, shared responsibility, and innovative solutions. It gives us an opportunity, together, to turn those dreams into a reality.

Filippo Grandi
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Home through the eyes of an 11-year-old refugee in Pakistan (1983). © UNHCR Archives Fonds 10c Children's Drawings (1970-2000)

Table of Contents

Foreword **2**

Introduction **5**

Global Compact on Refugees: Indicator Framework **7**

Key findings and recommendations **9**

The scale of burden and responsibility **18**

The extent of burden- and responsibility-sharing **24**

Objective 1: Ease pressure on host countries 27

Objective 2: Enhance refugee self-reliance 38

Objective 3: Expand access to third-country solutions 47

Objective 4: Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity 52

Roadmap to the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review **56**

Advancing refugee data inclusion **60**

Note on data sources and methodology 65

Endnotes **68**

The mural captures the hope reflected in the eyes of a child gazing towards the future. It was created in Zarqa, Jordan, through collaboration with Syrian refugee youth and Jordanian host community youth. This artwork was part of a large-scale program implemented across Lebanon and Jordan in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the German Development Agency (GIZ). © ARTOLUTION, GIZ. Photo and mural credit: Dr. Max Frieder, Ed.D.

Introduction

On December 17, 2018, the UN General Assembly affirmed the Global Compact on Refugees. This followed two years of consultations led by UNHCR and involved Member States, international organizations, refugees, civil society, the private sector, and experts. The Compact encourages countries to share responsibility for refugees in a fair and predictable way. It also provides a framework to help host communities and give refugees the chance to build better lives. The goal is to enhance the world's response to people who are displaced.

The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) Indicator Report 2025 is the third edition of this flagship report. Its purpose is to track and support progress towards the four objectives of the Compact: to ease pressures on host countries; enhance refugee self-reliance; expand access to third-country solutions; and support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. Building on the lessons learned from previous editions, the 2025 edition covers the period from 2016 to mid-2025. Unless otherwise specified, all references to refugees in this report include refugees, individuals in refugee-like situations, and others in need of international protection. It uses data from the 16 GCR indicators to provide an assessment of what has been achieved and the obstacles that remain in implementing the Compact. It also provides evidence-based insights into how the Compact has influenced refugee responses worldwide. The findings of this report will inform the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Progress Review, the next high-level officials' meeting (HLOM), in December 2025. The midway point between Global Refugee Forums, the GRF Progress Review is a key opportunity to reflect on results achieved, take stock of progress made against the GCR objectives, and chart the course towards the next GRF in 2027.

Stakeholders have been preparing to convene amid an environment marked by fragile and uneven development progress, rising sovereign debt burdens, and shrinking global aid resources. Simultaneously, persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order—including those triggered by natural disasters—continue to force populations to flee their homes. These conditions have placed significant strain on the principle of international cooperation itself. As the UN Secretary-General has observed, the world is experiencing *"an age of reckless disruption and relentless human suffering"*. Yet, he also emphasized the importance of collective action and the power of the people to uphold shared humanity.[1]

Despite these challenges, the global community has demonstrated its ability to unite and respond, as reflected in the two last GCR Indicator Reports. The key question now is whether that resolve will endure. Amid escalating global crises, does the world continue to stand with refugees and the communities that welcome them? Looking ahead, how can the international community continue to work together more effectively, more equitably, and with greater impact?

This report seeks to answer these questions by analyzing the 16 GCR indicators and highlighting key trends. These insights form the basis for the section on **key findings and policy recommendations,** which summarizes the main messages for each indicator, with a more detailed data analysis found in the subsequent sections of the report. The section also includes key actions aimed at further realizing the vision of the GCR. They are also intended to inform stakeholders ahead of the GRF Progress Review in December 2025 in Geneva. The section on the **scale of the burden and responsibility** outlines the magnitude and evolving patterns of refugee flows. It provides a comprehensive overview of how displacement patterns have changed over the past decade.

The section on the **extent of burden- and responsibility-sharing** begins with the use of the Gini coefficient[2] as a statistically rigorous measure of disparities among countries hosting refugees and providing durable solutions. The Gini coefficient was calculated using each country's per capita income, allowing the analysis to reflect both existing contributions and the varying capacities and resources available across countries. This section also highlights progress towards the four GCR objectives using 16 indicators grouped under eight outcomes. These indicators, developed through broad multistakeholder consultations, are outlined in the GCR Indicator Framework. Where available, data span the period from 2016 to mid-2025, reflecting progress over a decade. Building on previous analyses from the last two GCR Indicator Reports, this edition incorporates updated data and refined methodologies, strengthening the evidence base and providing a clearer understanding of key trends without requiring reference to earlier reports.

The section on the **Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Progress Review 2025** provides background on the upcoming meeting in December, which forms part of the Compact's ongoing process to foster sustained engagement among States and stakeholders in refugee responses. It offers a high-level overview of progress made on the multi-stakeholder pledges announced at the GRF 2023, summarizing key implementation efforts, as captured in the GRF Progress Review: Pledge Stocktaking Report 2025.

Robust data are essential for tracking progress under the GCR and enabling the international community to adjust course based on reliable evidence. This report aimed to use quality, comparable, and timely data aligned with international statistical standards. Every effort was made to ensure the availability and quality of data for the 16 GCR indicators, including the use of complementary sources to enhance their accuracy and reliability. However, the section on **Advancing refugee data inclusion** reveals that progress in improving data availability for monitoring the GCR indicators is at risk due to the ongoing funding crisis. Despite these challenges, efforts continue to promote statistical inclusion, to ensure refugees are systematically represented in national data systems.

Global Compact on Refugees: Indicator Framework

The GCR Indicator Framework, first published in 2019 and refined in 2022, is the backbone of this report and was developed after extensive consultations with States and other GCR stakeholders.

GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES: INDICATOR FRAMEWORK			
Objective 1: Ease pressures on host countries	**Objective 2:** Enhance refugee self-reliance	**Objective 3:** Expand access to third-country solutions	**Objective 4:** Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity
Outcome 1.1: Resources supporting additional instruments and programmes are made available for refugees and host communities by an increasing number of donors	**Outcome 2.1:** Refugees are able to actively participate in the social and economic life of host countries	**Outcome 3.1:** Refugees in need have access to resettlement opportunities in an increasing number of countries	**Outcome 4.1:** Resources are made available to support the sustainable reintegration of returning refugees by an increasing number of donors
Indicator 1.1.1: Volume of official development assistance (ODA) for the benefit of refugees and host communities in the refugee-hosting ODA recipient country **Indicator 1.1.2:** Number of donors providing ODA for the benefit of refugees and host communities in the refugee-hosting ODA recipient country	**Indicator 2.1.1:** Proportion of refugees who have access to decent work by law **Indicator 2.1.2:** Proportion of refugees who are allowed by law to move freely within the host country	**Indicator 3.1.1:** Number of refugees who departed on resettlement from the host country **Indicator 3.1.2:** Number of countries receiving UNHCR resettlement submissions from the host country	**Indicator 4.1.1:** Volume of ODA for the benefit of refugee returnees in the ODA recipient country of origin **Indicator 4.1.2:** Number of donors providing ODA for the benefit of refugee returnees in the ODA recipient country of origin

GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES: INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

Objective 1: Ease pressures on host countries	**Objective 2:** Enhance refugee self-reliance	**Objective 3:** Expand access to third-country solutions	**Objective 4:** Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity
Outcome 1.2: National arrangements and coordinated refugee responses are supported	**Outcome 2.2**: Refugee and host community self-reliance is strengthened	**Outcome 3.2:** Refugees have access to complementary pathways for admission to third countries	**Outcome 4.2:** Refugees are able to return and reintegrate socially and economically
Indicator 1.2.1: Proportion of ODA for the benefit of refugees and host communities channelled to national actors in the refugee-hosting ODA recipient country **Indicator 1.2.2:** Number of partners in refugee response plans supporting the refugee hosting country	**Indicator 2.2.1:** Proportion of refugee children enrolled in the national education system (primary and secondary) **Indicator 2.2.2:** Proportion of refugee and host community populations living below the national poverty line of the host country	**Indicator 3.2.1:** Number of refugees admitted through complementary pathways from the host country **Indicator 3.2.2:** Number of countries offering safe admission and stay options through complementary pathways to refugees hosted in other countries	**Indicator 4.2.1:** Number of refugees returning to their country of origin **Indicator 4.2.2:** Proportion of returnees with legally recognized documentation and credentials

Home through the eyes of an 11-year-old refugee in Pakistan (1983). © UNHCR Archives Fonds 10c Children's Drawings (1970-2000)

CHAPTER 1

Key findings and recommendations

The international community has made steady progress in key areas, demonstrating that coordinated efforts under the Compact, while not without challenges, can deliver stronger results. Although burden- and responsibility-sharing for hosting refugees remains uneven, it has improved since 2016. However, these gains are increasingly at risk due to declining funding and weakening international solidarity. Sustained collective action is essential. To maintain momentum across the four objectives, the international community must reaffirm its commitment by protecting high-impact programmes, expanding cross-sector collaboration, and leveraging multi-stakeholder pledges to drive innovation, mobilize resources effectively, and scale solutions for refugees.

Despite ongoing challenges, meaningful progress has been made towards a better future for refugees and host communities. Building on these efforts, the following key areas for action have been identified to sustain momentum and address remaining gaps.

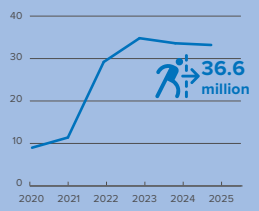
1. As funding shortfalls increase the risks faced by refugees, the GCR is more essential than ever for promoting equitable, lasting solutions and addressing the root causes of displacement.

Key findings:

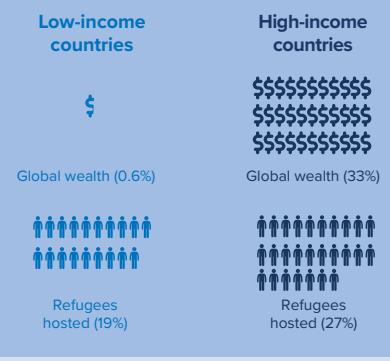
While refugee numbers grew[3] slowly after 2022 and remained relatively stable in recent years, sharply reduced funding has increased vulnerabilities.

- **The total number of refugees reached 36.6 million by mid-2025, with growth slowing compared to previous years.**
- **Refugee numbers shifted unevenly, mostly as people fled to nearby countries—some regions saw increase, others decline.**
- **Low- and middle-income countries hosted 2.5 times more refugees than high-income countries.**
- **Ten countries, mostly low- and middle-income, hosted over half of the world's refugees in 2024.**
- **Women and girls faced heightened risks in displacement, exacerbated by funding gaps.**
- **Rising conflict-related deaths drove displacement, occurring at a time when funding for prevention fell.**

After 2022, the growth of the total number of refugees **slowed down and remained stable**, reaching **36.6 million** in mid-2025.



Prioritize support for low-income countries, which possess only **0.6% of global wealth** yet **host 19% of all refugees**.



In 2024, armed conflict took the life of one person **EVERY 12 MINUTES.**

When civilian deaths increase, **displacement also increases.**

Note: For more information, see page 22 of this report.
Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Key actions:

At the GRF Progress Review in December, United Nations Member States and relevant GCR stakeholders are called to:

- **Reaffirm the Compact as a practical blueprint** for today's challenges, one that promotes a holistic and humane approach to displacement. This means implementing the GCR from the onset of an emergency or conflict to effectively offer refugees safety, dignity, protection, inclusion, new opportunities, and sustainable solutions.
- **Embrace the principles of new multilateralism by reinforcing a whole-of-society approach**. This involves strengthening the broad coalition of actors, including States, civil society actors, development actors, international and regional financial institutions, local authorities, the private sector, and refugees themselves, to work more effectively together towards shared goals, in line with the Compact. Priority areas include inclusion in national systems, economic inclusion, resettlement and complementary pathways—including labour mobility, peacebuilding, climate action, and conditions for sustainable return.
- **Deepen cross-sector collaboration to foster innovation and deliver sustainable solutions.** In parallel, they should reinforce ongoing "minilateralism" by supporting regional and thematic frameworks and initiatives, such as multi-stakeholder pledges, the regional Support Platforms, the Shirika Plan, and the Chile Action Plan, among others, that coordinate targeted efforts in specific displacement contexts and complement broader global initiatives under the Compact.

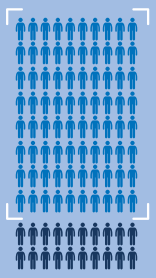
2. Rebalance and protect aid for refugee responses by reversing funding cuts, broadening and enhancing the coordination of the support base—especially for low- and middle-income host countries—and empowering local actors to lead inclusive, sustainable solutions.

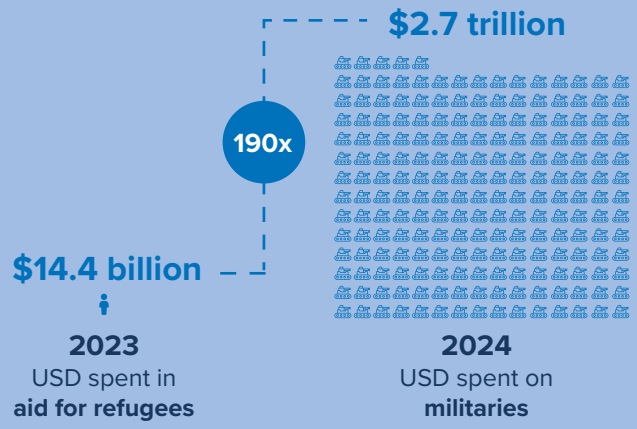
Key findings:

Official Development Assistance (ODA) for refugee situations in low-and middle-income countries (LICs and MICs)[4] amounted to USD 27.7 billion in 2022-2023, however, overall funding declined in 2024 and is expected to fall further in 2025. Available funding continued to be unevenly distributed, and support to national actors remained limited, despite growing local partnerships. While responsibility-sharing has improved, it remains highly unequal, with most aid coming from a few donors.

- **Progress was made in responsibility-sharing, but disparities remained.**
- **ODA for refugee situations in LICs and MICs amounted to USD 27.7 billion in 2022-2023, but signs of a downturn emerge amidst confirmed and projected cuts.**
- **USD 52.9 billion in ODA was allocated to support refugees and host communities in LICs and MICs in 2020-2023, but funding remained unevenly distributed.**
- **Donor engagement has grown since 2020, but over half of the funding came from just three providers.**
- **Sharp increase in domestic spending for hosting refugees in high-income countries (in-donor refugee costs')[5] has shifted the ODA balance.**
- **In 2022-2023, only 13 per cent of the ODA for refugee situations in LICs and MICs was channelled to national actors, falling further from the global target for local actors.**
- **In 2025, local partnerships in Refugee Response Plans expanded, contributing to the development of more inclusive and nationally led solutions.**

In 2024, countries with just **27% of global wealth** hosted **80% of the world's refugees**.

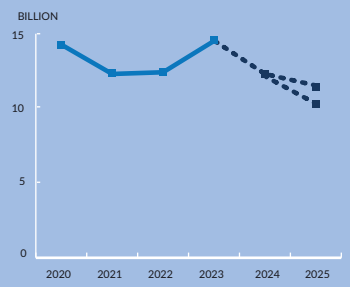




Note: "The growing military expenditure is crowding out resources essential for social investment, poverty reduction, education, health, environmental protection, and infrastructure"— including those related to refugee situations— despite evidence that increased military spending does not necessarily lead to greater peace or stability. For more information, see page 27 of this report.

Source: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

ODA for refugee situations in LICs and MICs amounted to **USD 27.7 billion** in 2022-2023, but support is unevenly distributed and declining.



Note: For the purpose of tracking concessional development finance for refugee situations from the recipient perspective, the use of the term ODA in this report refers to "ODA and concessional outflows from multilateral organizations".

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Key actions:

- **Sustain current ODA levels and unlock complementary financing sources**—particularly development-related support from the private sector, innovative financing such as blended finance, debt swaps, social impact bonds, bank guarantees, individual giving, entrepreneurial mechanisms, and South-South cooperation. Diversifying the funding base, including development banks, foundations, philanthropies, and development cooperation frameworks, will reduce reliance on a limited number of donors, increase the availability of predictable and long-term financing, and help mitigate the impact of anticipated funding reductions. Equally important is the quality of funding: increasing the share of unearmarked and flexible resources is essential to enable timely, agile, and needs-based responses. This is critical to ensuring effective and sustainable responses for displaced and host communities.
- **Adopt urgently a more coordinated and needs-based approach to ODA allocation.** Resources must be distributed effectively across regions, countries, and sectors—such as across all dimensions of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus—in line with the scale, nature, and specific needs of refugee populations. Such an approach will promote equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing, directing funding towards under-resourced areas that are critical for advancing refugee self-reliance and strengthening the resilience of host communities. Efforts to improve coordination should build on and leverage the expertise and networks of existing forums, including the Grand Bargain and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Sustainable Development. At the same time, they should also be consistent with current reform efforts through the Humanitarian Reset and the UN80 Initiative to ensure more efficient and locally grounded humanitarian action, greater empowerment of country-level leadership, streamlined funding mechanisms, and meaningful support to national systems. It is also essential to invest in enhancing the capacity for data collection, evidence generation, and analysis on ODA allocation and the implications of funding cuts.
- **Address the share of in-donor refugee costs within total ODA**, which underscores the need to uphold the principle of equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing. It is critical to ensure that LICs and MICs, which host the majority of the world's refugees, especially those in fragile contexts, those most vulnerable to climate-related events, debt, and most affected by funding cuts, receive support that is commensurate with their contributions and needs.
- **Enhance collaboration with regional mechanisms**, including GCR Support Platforms, Regional Economic Communities and Commissions, and **actively engage in global-level processes** such as Financing for Development, the G20, and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), to ensure refugee inclusion is reflected in broader development agendas.
- **Prioritize localization by shifting power to national actors to lead responses, starting with response planning.** This includes meeting the Grand Bargain target of channelling at least 25 per cent of global humanitarian funding "as directly as possible" to local and national responders. The decline in direct funding weakens the vital role of national actors; reversing this trend is key to more inclusive and effective implementation. Response planning must strategically focus on local leadership, ensure meaningful participation of national actors—especially refugees—in decision-making, and prioritize support for women-led and refugee-led organizations as frontline responders. International actors must foster equitable partnerships by sharing expertise, facilitating collaboration, and supporting risk management. Shifting power to local leadership ensures diverse national actors drive inclusive, effective, and context-specific solutions.

3. Inclusive laws alone are not enough—refugees need real access to jobs, education, and services. Targeted investments and stronger implementation are crucial to translating policy commitments into tangible opportunities and outcomes.

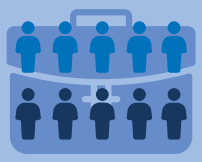
Key findings:

Legal access to work, public education, and freedom of movement for refugees has improved in some countries. However, progress remains insufficient. Persistent barriers and widespread poverty continue to hinder self-reliance for nearly half of the refugee population and limit the economic contributions refugees could make to host communities.

- **In 2024, six out of ten refugees were legally allowed to work and move freely.**
- **Access to formal employment remained stable from 2023 to mid-2025, with barriers persisting.**
- **Between 2022 and 2024, more countries adopted inclusive education policies for refugee children.**
- **Nearly half of refugee children enrolled in national schools, but challenges remain.**
- **Refugees consistently face higher poverty rates than host populations, with significant variation across hosting contexts.**
- **Inclusive work policies reduce refugee poverty as well as reliance on State support and benefit the economies of host communities.**

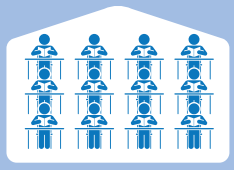
In 2024

6 out 10 of refugees had access to work in law



5 out 10 of refugees had access to formal employment

In 2024, nearly half of refugee children could go to **public schools**.



Inclusive work policies reduce refugee poverty and benefit the economies of host communities.

Key actions:

- **Targeted investments are needed to translate access to work in law into real opportunities for refugees, particularly in hosting areas.** This includes financing job creation, infrastructure, and local governance, while strengthening inclusive employment services, financial inclusion, and social protection systems to reduce inequality and social exclusion. Improving access to information and addressing administrative and social barriers is crucial to unlocking the full potential of inclusive laws and policies, ensuring refugees can participate meaningfully in local economies.
- **Governments and partners, with support from the international community, must strengthen education delivery to ensure meaningful enrolment and learning outcomes for refugee children.** This includes removing practical barriers such as documentation requirements, language obstacles, and indirect costs; ensuring consistent policy implementation and adequate teacher support; and investing in robust education data systems to track refugee access. Closing the gap between policy and practice is essential to uphold the right to education for all refugee learners.
- **Whole-of-government actors and development partners must translate inclusive socio-economic policies into sustainable responses and tangible opportunities for refugees.** This requires removing legal and administrative barriers—such as documentation, work permits, and movement restrictions—and implementing targeted interventions, including active labour market programmes and ultra-poor graduation

initiatives to support vulnerable groups. In rural areas, land provision and investment in modern agricultural inputs can boost productivity. Strengthening local infrastructure and services benefits both refugees and host communities, fosters social cohesion, and ensures equitable access to public services, labour markets, and social protection systems through integration into national development plans.

- **The Global Compact on Refugees must be anchored in broader development action.** States and stakeholders that committed to refugee inclusion must uphold these commitments across global, regional, and national development processes. This requires concrete steps to ensure the meaningful inclusion of refugees in development planning and implementation—such as integrating refugee-related considerations in national development plans, common country assessment (inter-agency), United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs), and voluntary national reviews (VNRs) of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

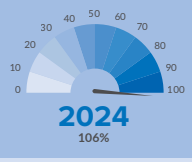
4. Drive expansion and sustainability of resettlement by mobilizing new actors and increasing State commitments, while integrating refugees into legal migration systems to leverage complementary pathways through community sponsorship and improved travel documentation.

Key findings:

Resettlement reached a record high in 2024, before declining in 2025, while complementary pathways, led by family reunification, grew from 2016 to 2023. However, third-country solutions still fall short of global needs.

- **Resettlement surpassed the annual target in 2024, before numbers dropped sharply in 2025.**
- **Complementary pathways on the rise, with 38 countries having issued permits to over 1.7 million refugees between 2016 and 2023.**
- **Family permits accounted for the majority of regular pathway admissions, labour and study routes accelerated.**
- **Just four countries issued over half of the first-time entry permits from 2016 to 2023.**

RESETTLEMENT SURPASSED the annual target in 2024, before numbers **DROPPED SHARPLY** in 2025.



Complementary pathways on the rise

38 COUNTRIES
having issued permits to over **1.7 million refugees** between 2016 to 2023.

FAMILY
permits accounted for majority of regular pathway admissions, labour and study routes **accelerated**.

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Key actions:

- **Strengthen coordinated advocacy to expand and sustain resettlement efforts.** Engage new States, civil society actors, and receiving communities to broaden the resettlement base, while scaling up existing programmes to ensure their sustainability and impact.
- **States should increase the number of resettlement places and broaden participation in resettlement, recognizing its vital role in protection, durable solutions, and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing.** Applying protection-centred criteria and adopting flexible processing modalities will help expand access and ensure resettlement remains responsive to the needs of those most at risk.
- **Include refugees in legal migration frameworks with flexibilities that account for their protection needs to help scale complementary pathways and enable family reunification.** Utilize sponsorship pathways for refugees to further grow third-country solutions through leveraging community support. Build the capacity of State systems to issue machine-readable refugee travel documents, which can promote access to skills-based pathways.

5. To make voluntary return safe and dignified, it is essential to ensure security and documentation, invest in housing, services, and livelihoods, and work together through inclusive, coordinated approaches backed by predictable funding.

Key findings:

Support for returnees remains disproportionately low, despite a sharp rise in returns, with persistent barriers to durable return and reintegration, making these efforts harder and less sustainable.

- **The bulk of the ODA went to refugees in hosting countries, with only 3.5 per cent reaching returnees in countries of origin.**
- **Funding for returnees increased by 6 per cent in 2023 compared to 2020 but remained far below the level needed to match the sharp rise in returnee numbers.**
- **The number of donors stayed constant but shifted unpredictably.**
- **Refugee returns 2015–2025: A decade of shifting realities with 1.6 million going home in 2024.**

Millions of returnees in 2024 and mid-2025:

1.6 MILLION in **2024** — 12 months

2 MILLION in **mid-2025** — 6 months

Funding for returnees far below needs: Funding for returnees amounted to **USD 1.9 BILLION** (2020-2023), far below the level needed to match the **sharp rise in returnee numbers**.

Key actions:

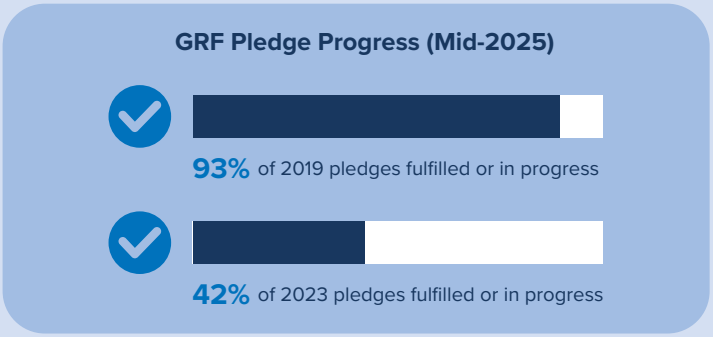
- **Voluntary and informed return must be grounded in safety, dignity, and protection of rights.** Countries of origin must ensure security, uphold and provide access to legal identity and civil documentation. Returns should be based on free and informed decisions and should not be driven by deteriorating conditions in host countries. This helps to prevent secondary displacement and support sustainable reintegration.
- **Sustainable reintegration requires long-term investment in recovery and development that responds to the specific needs of returnees and their communities.** Governments and partners should prioritize rehabilitating housing and infrastructure, addressing housing, land and property issues, expanding access to essential services such as health, education, and water, and creating economic opportunities through livelihoods and vocational training. These efforts must be coordinated and aligned with national development plans to ensure durable solutions and foster social cohesion.
- **Scale up support for voluntary return and sustainable reintegration through inclusive, coordinated, and well-resourced approaches.** Planning and implementation must involve humanitarian, development, and peace actors, alongside host communities, local authorities, and returnees. Countries of origin require predictable, multi-year funding and international support to ensure returns are safe, dignified, and sustainable. Improve the allocation of ODA by aligning resources with the actual number and needs of returnees, addressing funding gaps in high-return areas, and enhancing coordination among donors and development actors to reduce fragmentation. Broaden the support base beyond existing donors—including local governments and the private sector—to increase the volume and effectiveness of reintegration assistance.
- **Address the root causes of displacement by prioritizing diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of disputes.** Shift the pursuit of security towards a human-centred, multidimensional approach grounded in dignity, human rights, and sustainable development.[6] Reinforce and reinvigorate financing for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and long-term development to create resilient societies and reduce the risk of future displacement. In situations of conflict, advocate for and ensure respect for International Humanitarian Law to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

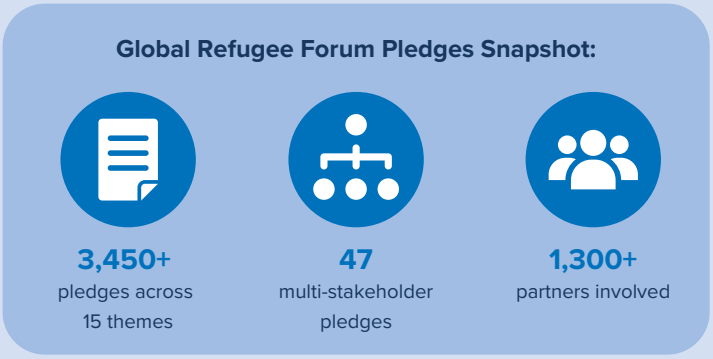
6. The GRF multi-stakeholder pledging framework remains central to advancing the GCR, uniting a broader coalition to reinforce responsibility-sharing. There is an urgent need to sustain and accelerate the progress made since the GRF 2023 by advancing pledge matching to support the implementation of policy pledges by host countries.

Key findings:

The multi-stakeholder pledge framework, introduced at the GRF 2023, set a whole-of-society ambition. The stocktaking exercise carried out in 2025 has confirmed its effectiveness in delivering tangible protection, inclusion, and solutions, despite funding and political challenges.

- **Over 3,450 pledges have been recorded across 15 thematic areas, driving 47 multi-stakeholder pledges and involving more than 1,300 partners.**
- **By mid-2025, implementation of GRF pledges has surged, with 93 per cent of pledges made in 2019 and 42 per cent from 2023 reported as either fulfilled or in progress.**





Key actions:

- **Strategic implementation of the Compact should prioritize the continued strengthening of its multi-stakeholder approach, which has demonstrated tangible impact in advancing burden- and responsibility-sharing.** By placing refugees at the centre and engaging a broad spectrum of actors, this model has successfully driven progress across 47 multi-stakeholder pledge initiatives, broadening the base of partners by almost double from 2019 to 2023.
- **The multi-stakeholder pledges should be leveraged further to advance pledge matching to support the implementation of policy pledges by host countries through providing financial, material, and technical support.** Further improving the availability and quality of data on the implementation of multi-stakeholder pledges would help facilitate pledge matching.

7. Further investing in statistical inclusion and building strong monitoring systems are essential to ensure forcibly displaced and stateless people are systematically represented in national planning and data systems.

Key findings:

While data availability under the GCR is improving, persistent gaps in nationally-produced data, especially in areas related to inclusion, continue to hinder progress and risk deepening due to potential funding cuts.

- **Progress in data availability for GCR indicators is fragile due to the growing impact of funding cuts.**
- **Statistical inclusion is making good strides, advanced through multi-stakeholder pledges.**

GCR data gaps:

- Progress is **FRAGILE**
- Funding cuts **THREATEN** **data availability**

STATISTICAL INCLUSION IS MAKING GOOD STRIDES, advanced through multi-stakeholder pledges.

Key actions:

- **Accelerating statistical inclusion and evidence-based decision-making requires increased investment in national statistical systems.** Governments and partners should strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems across six key dimensions: governance and standards, data financing, production, dissemination, use, and meaningful participation. This will ensure that refugee-related data is integrated into national systems and used to inform inclusive policies and programming.
- **Promote a robust monitoring framework to assess statistical inclusion and strengthen national data systems.** This will help identify strengths and gaps, foster collaboration through shared insights and peer learning, and support more inclusive, evidence-based decision-making for refugee responses.

"The Future of Peace" mural was created by Syrian refugee artists on a caravan in the Azraq Refugee Camp in northern Jordan. At its centre is a dove, symbolizing peace, with elements representing the dreams of a peaceful life radiating outward. These components, painted by children, reflect their aspirations to return to Syria and rebuild their lives. © ARTOLUTION, UNHCR Jordan, UNICEF Jordan. Photo and mural credit: Samir Al-Ghafari.

CHAPTER 2

The scale of burden and responsibility

The total number of refugees reached 36.6 million by mid-2025, with growth slowing compared to previous years.

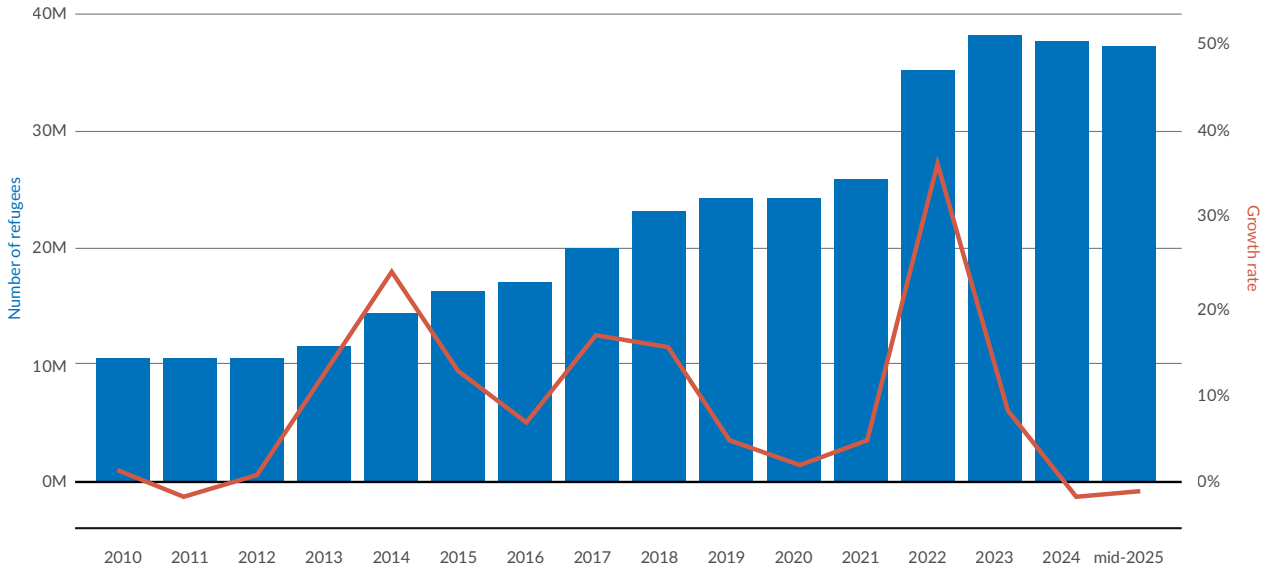
At the end of June 2025, 117.3 million individuals worldwide remained forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.[7] This is composed of:

- **42.5 million refugees and other people in need of international protection**
  - **30.5 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate**
  - **6.1 million other people in need of international protection**
  - **5.9 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate**
- **67.8 million internally displaced people**
- **8.4 million asylum-seekers**

The total number of refugees worldwide reached **36.6 million** by mid-2025, a 6-per cent increase, or 1.9 million additional refugees since the end of 2022, as reported in the last GCR Indicator Report. This total comprised nearly 27.2 million refugees, 3.3 million people in refugee-like situations, and 6.1 million other people in need of international protection.[8] Between 2016 and mid-2025, the number of refugees more than doubled. The global number of refugees has declined slightly in recent years: it fell by 1.5 per cent from 2023 to 2024, and by a further 0.8 per cent from 2024 to mid-2025 (see Figure 1). For three consecutive years, the number of refugees has exceeded 34 million, which is above the combined population size of Australia and New Zealand.[9] Most of the refugees and other people in need of international protection come from a few countries, such as Afghanistan, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, South Sudan, Sudan, and Myanmar. The modest slowdown in the growth of the total number of refugees can be attributed to three factors. First, fewer people were granted refugee status or temporary protection. Second, more individuals returned to their countries, including Syrians, Afghans, South Sudanese and Ukrainians. However, some of these returns occurred under conditions not conducive to sustainable reintegration. Some returns were premature, driven either by deteriorating conditions in host countries or the absence of adequate support and services in countries of origin. As a result, successful reintegration remains a significant challenge for many returnees. Third, resettlement efforts increased in 2024 but dropped sharply by mid-2025.

Given the rapidly evolving nature of many displacement situations, UNHCR produces nowcasting estimates to provide more timely and responsive data. Based on these estimates, the global number of refugees and refugee-like populations reached 31.3 million by the end of September 2025, with an additional 8.5 million individuals registered as asylum-seekers.[10]

Figure 1: Growth rate of the absolute number of refugees, 2010-2024 (year-on-year) – mid-2025



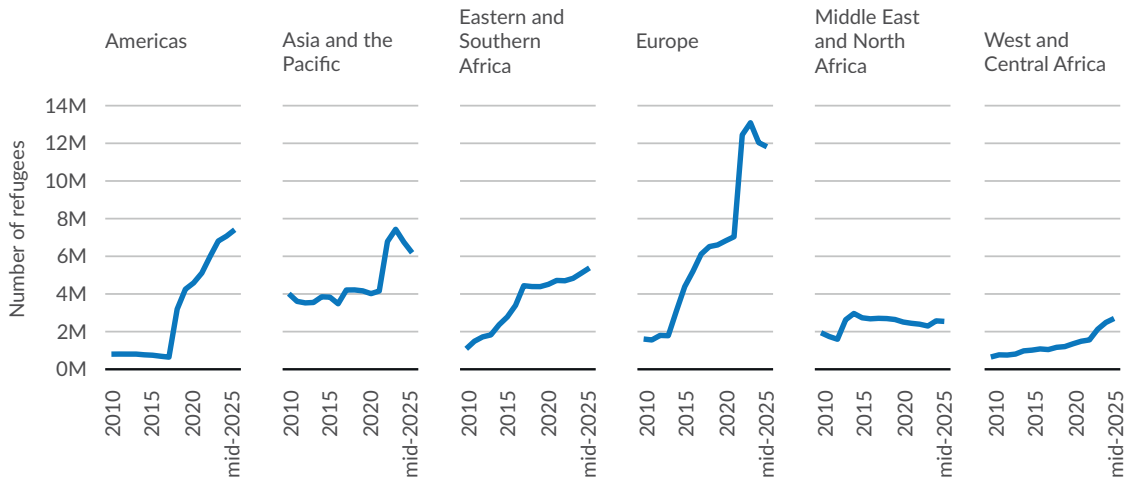
Refugee numbers shifted unevenly between regions, mostly as people fled to nearby countries.

Between the end of 2016 and June 2025, refugee hosting patterns changed significantly across regions, largely driven by people seeking safety in neighbouring countries or within the same region (see Figure 2). In the Americas, there was a sharp increase, more than tenfold, in the number of refugees and other people in need of international protection, mainly due to people leaving their countries of origin because of violence, conflict, political, economic, and humanitarian crisis. West and Central Africa experienced a doubling of their refugee populations, primarily driven by displacement from Sudan and Burkina Faso. Europe, including Türkiye, also saw its refugee populations more than double. The numbers rose sharply between 2021 and 2023

due to arrivals from Ukraine. However, in 2024, a decline occurred as some Syrians began returning home following the fall of the Assad government on 8 December 2024, many under adverse conditions. Some Ukrainians also returned, with many vulnerable refugees choosing to return partly due to challenges in accessing rights and services in host countries.[11]

Between the end of 2016 and June 2025, the number of refugees in Asia and the Pacific nearly doubled. However, from 2023 to mid-2025, the numbers dropped as many Afghans returned or were deported mainly from neighbouring countries, often in adverse circumstances. Other regions remained relatively stable. Eastern and Southern Africa experienced modest changes, with an increase of approximately 1.6 times. In contrast, the Middle East and North Africa saw a 5 per cent decrease in refugee numbers.

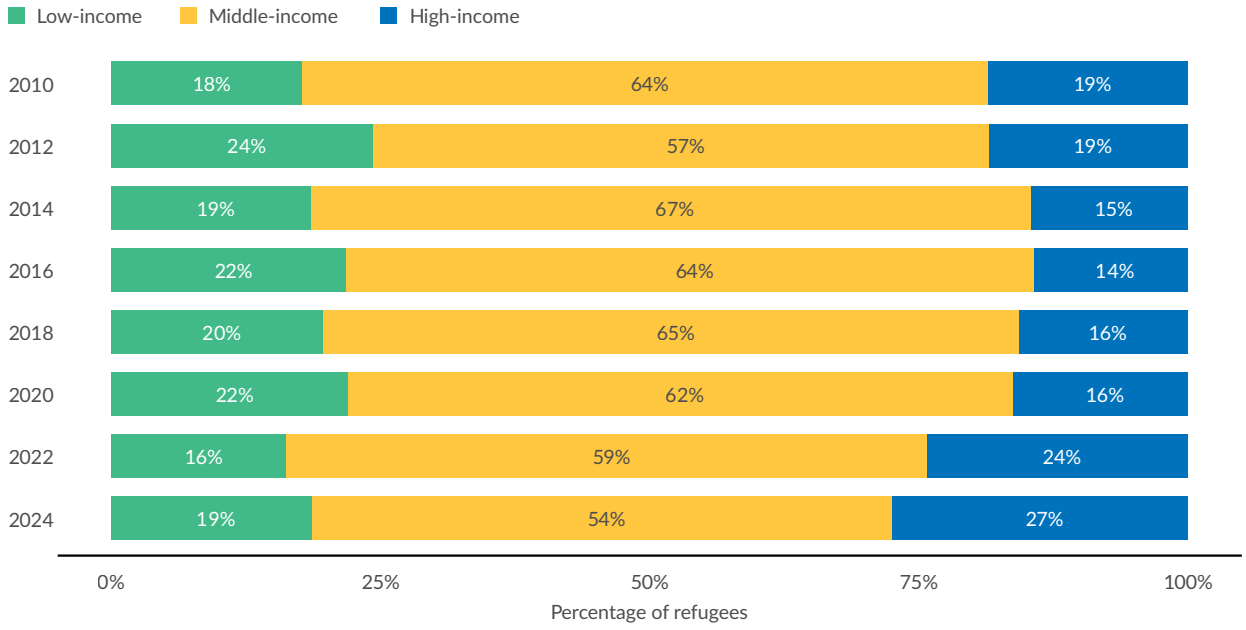
Figure 2: Number of refugees by UNHCR regions, 2016 – mid-2025



Low- and middle-income countries hosted 2.5 times more refugees than high-income countries.

By the end of 2024, low- and middle-income countries hosted nearly 2.5 times more refugees than high-income countries, despite collectively generating only about one third of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).[12] This emphasized the disproportionate burden on these nations, most of which are located near the countries of origin. In absolute terms, this meant that while high-income countries hosted approximately 10.1 million refugees, low- and middle-income countries took in around 26.7 million people seeking safety and stability. Millions of Ukrainians found refuge in nearby high-income European countries, leading to an increase in the number of refugees hosted in high-income countries, which reached 27 per cent of the world's refugees by the end of 2024, up from 14 per cent in 2016 (Figure 3). Despite this rise, high-income countries, which generate nearly two-thirds of global GDP, still host a smaller proportion of the world's refugees. In contrast, low-income countries, which account for just nine per cent of the global population and possess only 0.6 per cent of global wealth, hosted 19 per cent of all refugees. Countries such as Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda continued to take on large refugee populations, often with limited resources. Whether measured by economic capacity or population size, it remains the world's less wealthy nations that bear the greatest responsibility for hosting refugees.

Figure 3: Hosting refugees by countries' income level, 2016 and 2024 (end-year)

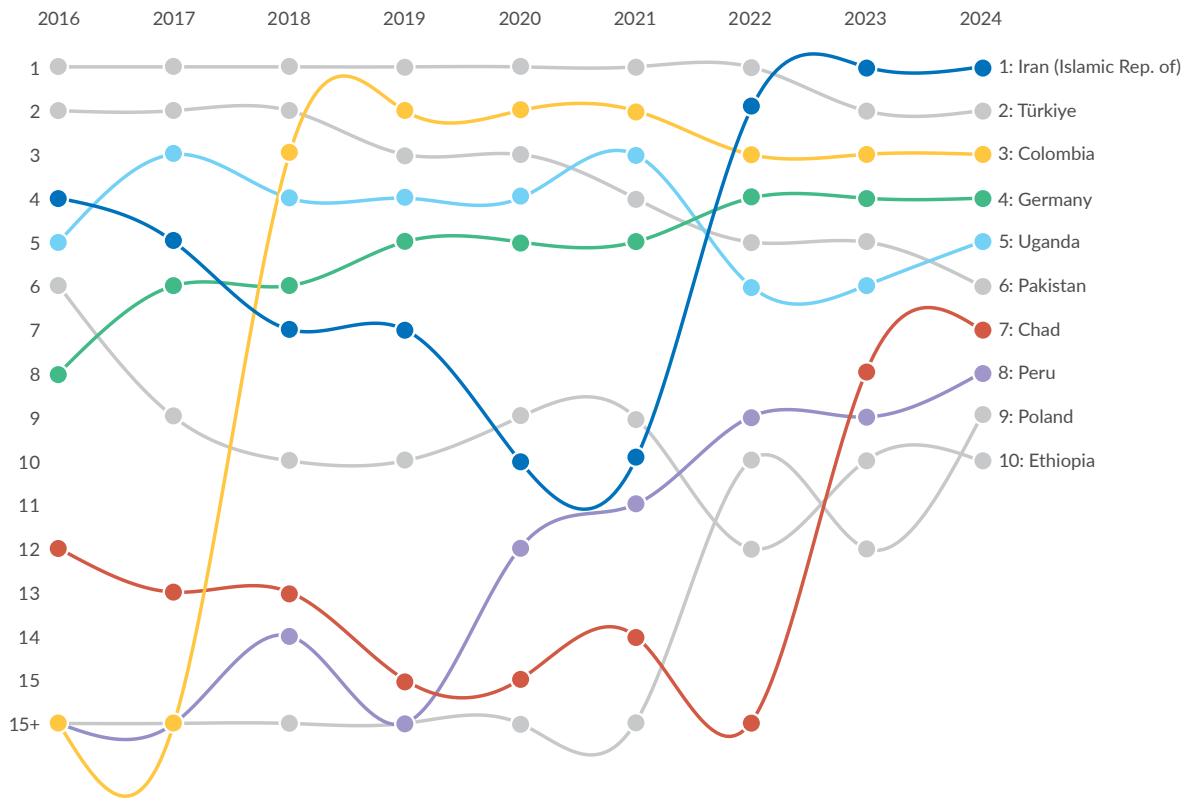


Ten countries, mostly low- and middle-income, hosted over half of the world's refugees in 2024.

By the end of 2024, 54 per cent of the global refugee population was hosted by just 10 countries, underscoring the highly uneven levels of pressure for protecting and assisting refugees and the need for supporting host countries and communities.

Figure 4 illustrates a notable shift in the composition of countries hosting the largest numbers of refugees and other people in need of international protection compared to 2016. Colombia, Chad, Peru, and Poland emerged as major hosts in 2024. Most of these 10 host countries are classified as low- or middle-income, reflecting the continued trend of resource-constrained countries bearing a disproportionate share of the global displacement burden.

Figure 4: Largest countries hosting refugees and other people in need of international protection, 2016 and 2024 (end-year)



In 2016, Germany was the only high-income country among the largest 10 hosting countries, and by 2024, Poland also joined this group. Notably, three low-income countries — Uganda, Chad, and Ethiopia — remained among the largest hosts, unchanged from 2016.[13]

Women and girls faced greater risks in displacement, worsened by funding gaps.

Consistent with proportions reported in the 2023 GCR Indicator Report, in 2024, children made up 41 per cent of all refugees, while women and girls accounted for 50 per cent. These percentages have stayed steady, even as refugee populations have changed due to crises in Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan, and Ukraine. Displacement exacerbates the daily risks of discrimination and violence that women and girls face due to their gender and power imbalance. Along their journeys, they face many risks such as human trafficking, child labour, child marriage, sexual violence, exploitation, mental health challenges, being detained for immigration reasons, and sometimes even death while seeking safety. Those who are unaccompanied, pregnant, heads of households, with disability, older or representing marginalized groups are even more at risk.

UNHCR has made significant strides in disaggregating refugee population data by sex, age, and diversity using advanced statistical modelling. Sex- and age-disaggregated data for refugees were available in 142 countries (out of 172) in 2024, covering 80 per cent of the global refugee population. This compares to 125 countries (out of 165) and 57 per cent in 2015. Together with active consultations with refugee communities, this detailed data helps design programmes that target the real needs of refugees, favouring UNHCR's Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) programming, and enable a better response to the challenges of mixed movements through the "route-based approach".[14] For example, in 2024, 52 per cent of the 2.7 million new individuals registered in UNHCR's registration system were women and girls. Having their own individual documentation allowed them to access services on their own, improved their legal status, and contributed to lowering their risk of exploitation and abuse. By collecting disaggregated data, resources could be targeted and used more precisely, ensuring that assistance reached those with the greatest needs. Unfortunately, in 2025, UNHCR's registration programmes faced a 25 per cent reduction.[15] Overall reductions in humanitarian funding have serious consequences. In 2024, 1.6 million people—primarily women and girls—benefited from services aimed at preventing and responding to gender-based violence across 86 countries. However, cuts to gender-based violence (GBV) response services and prevention programs significantly heighten the risk of GBV, including sexual violence and child abuse, leaving at-risk populations increasingly exposed.[16] Disaggregated data was crucial in informing decisions about budget cuts, particularly in mitigating their impact on the most at-risk populations. The budget cuts will ultimately leave them dangerously exposed and amplify the daily challenges they face.

More efforts are needed to improve data availability on other diversity factors, including disability, indigenous status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC), nationality, ethnicity, and others. Collecting and analyzing disaggregated data is crucial for ensuring that humanitarian responses are inclusive, rights-based, and tailored to the specific context. Statistical inclusion, which involves actively ensuring that diverse forcibly displaced and stateless people are represented in data collection and analysis, significantly enhances the availability and quality of disaggregated data (see also the last section on **Advancing refugee data inclusion**).

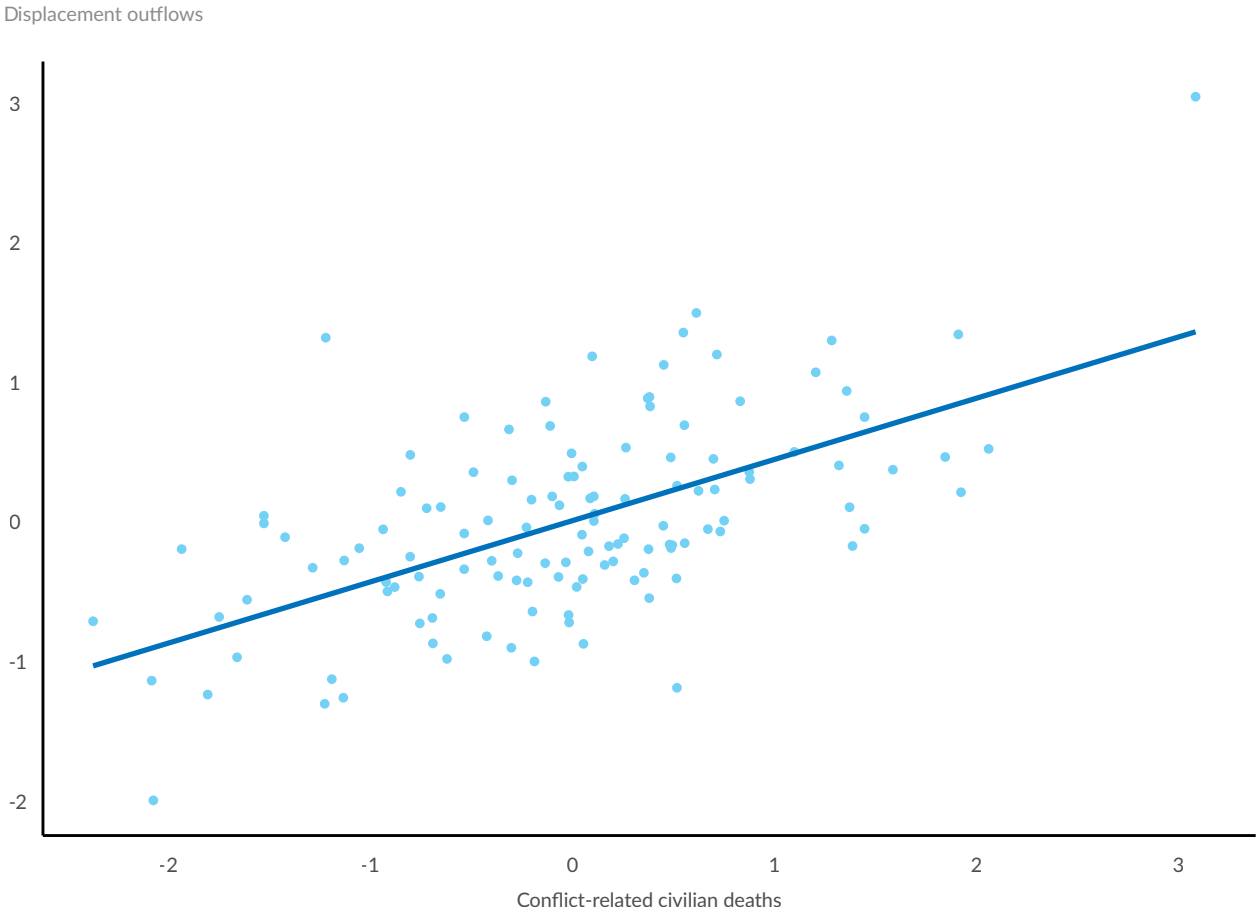
Rising conflict-related deaths drove displacement, occurring at a time when funding for prevention fell.

Civilian deaths in armed conflicts surged in 2024, with one life lost every 12 minutes. Between 2023 and 2024, the number of women and children killed in conflict increased fourfold, showing how violence is becoming more indiscriminate, disproportionate and devastating.[17] The decision to flee violence is never simple. But the pattern is clear: the more intense the fighting and the higher the civilian death toll, the more people are forced to leave their homes. From 2015 to 2024, a 10 per cent increase in civilian deaths was statistically associated with a 4.2 per cent increase in displacement outflows (see Figure 5). For example, if conflict-related deaths rose from 1,000 to 1,100, an additional 42 people would be forced to flee.[18]

When violence becomes more indiscriminate and disproportionate, such as with heavy weapons and explosives in highly populated areas that violate

international humanitarian and human rights laws, more people are forced to flee. Even after fighting ends, danger persists. Landmines and unexploded ordnances continue to threaten lives, and damaged infrastructure and insecurity make it harder for people to return and rebuild. As a result, forced displacement often becomes a long-term issue. Meanwhile, funding for peace efforts is shrinking, especially in countries facing extreme fragility. Between 2019 and 2023, ODA for peace dropped by 28 per cent, reaching just USD 5.3 billion in 2023 compared to 7.4 billion in 2019. One of the steepest declines was in support for international peacekeeping operations, which fell by 84 per cent, despite strong evidence that prevention, particularly peacekeeping, is a cost-effective way to reduce violence, save lives and limit displacement.[19]

Figure 5: Comparing conflict-related civilian deaths and displacement outflows, 2015-2024



"We return to our homes; we will always be united." Drawing by an 11-year-old refugee from Cyprus in Greece (1983). © UNHCR Archives Fonds 10c Children's Drawings (1970-2000)

CHAPTER 3

The extent of burden- and responsibility-sharing

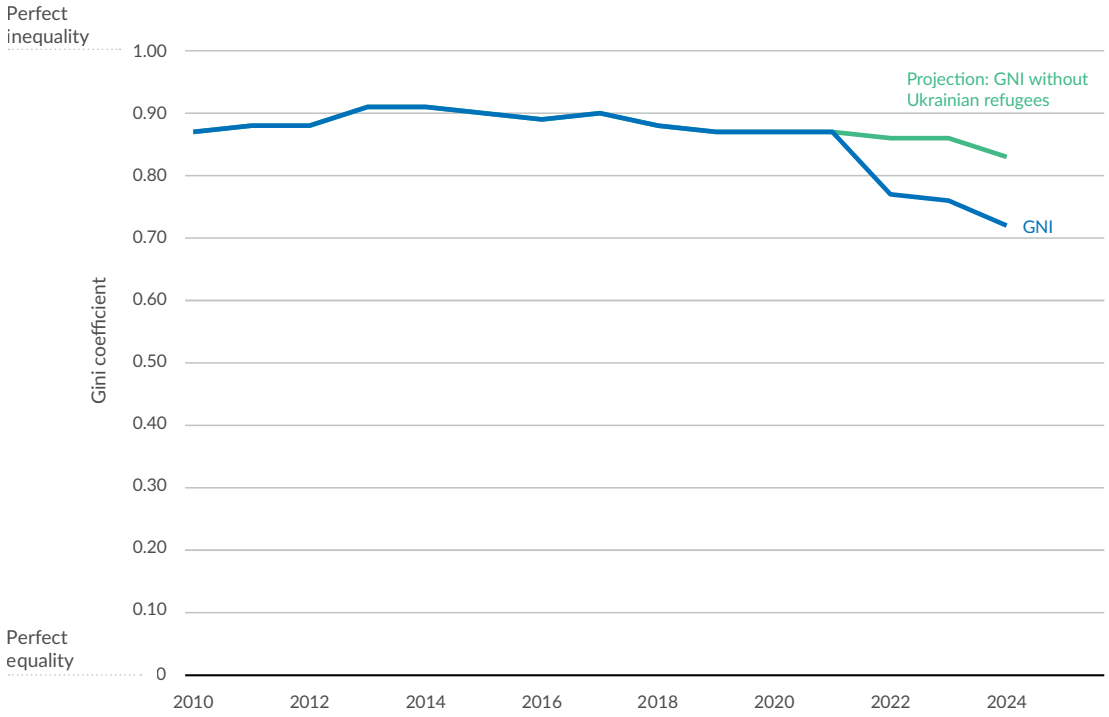
The 1951 Refugee Convention, adopted 75 years ago, highlights the importance of shared responsibility in addressing refugee situations. The GCR, affirmed in 2018, does not replace the Convention but aims at complementing it by outlining the mechanisms to achieve shared responsibility, fostering stronger cooperation, particularly among States, as well as across the international community through whole-of-society approaches. The Compact is a non-binding and non-political blueprint that seeks to empower host countries with greater influence and improved tools to manage refugee situations and secure the support they require.

To assess how countries share this responsibility, the Gini coefficient was applied to the per capita wealth of the resident population, as measured by the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita adjusted to Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).[20] The Gini coefficient is a statistical tool used to measure the degree of inequality in the distribution of responsibility among countries. The Gini coefficient always ranges between 0 and 1. A Gini value of 0 would signify perfect equality—every country would be hosting refugees in direct proportion to its wealth—while a value of 1 would indicate that all refugees are concentrated in a single host country, with others bearing no share of the responsibility. Thus, the closer the Gini coefficient is to 1, the more pronounced the inequity in global responsibility-sharing for refugees becomes.

Progress was made in responsibility-sharing, but disparities remained.

In 2024, the Gini coefficient stood at 0.72, underscoring the starkly uneven distribution of responsibility for hosting and supporting refugees—a clear signal of the urgent need for collective action. Encouragingly, there has been a modest but consistent improvement in responsibility-sharing since the affirmation of the GCR. Responsibility-sharing has edged up in recent years; however, this positive trend primarily reflects a notable rise in the number of refugees residing in high-income countries. Countries with greater wealth and established support systems have taken on a relatively larger share of the responsibility. While much of this shift is driven by the influx of refugees from Ukraine, excluding them from the analysis still reveals a slight improvement in responsibility-sharing (Figure 6). The modest increase in the number of refugees in high-income countries highlights both the adaptability of international response systems and the continued need for strong, collaborative efforts to support low-income countries, which still host 19 per cent of the world's refugees and bear a substantial burden.

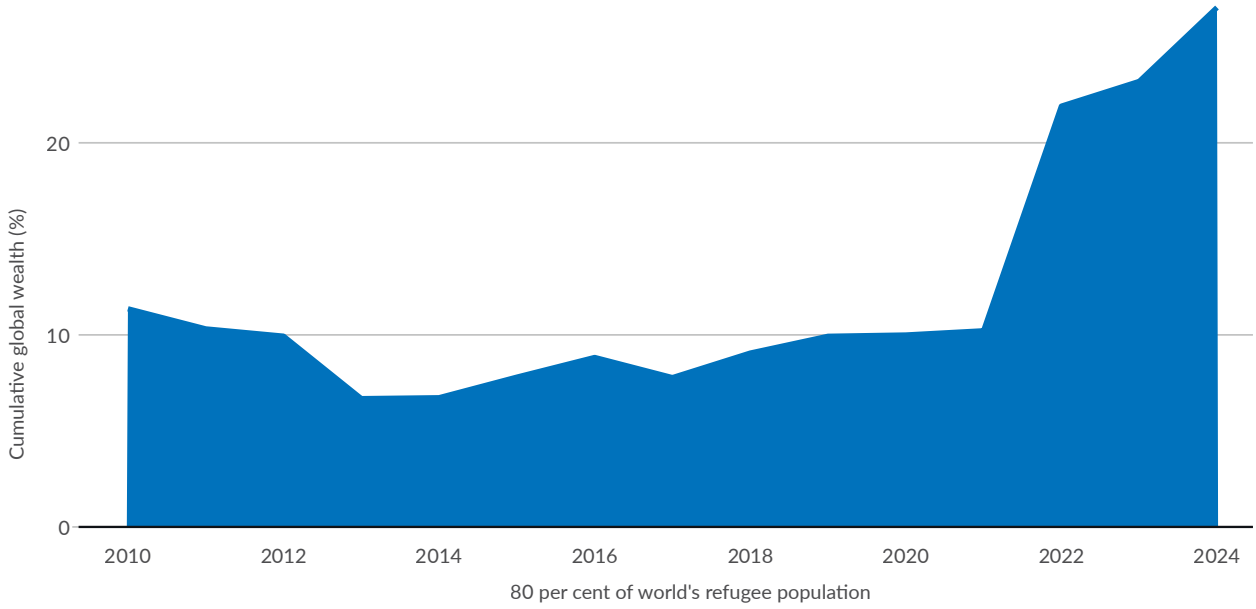
Figure 6: Gini coefficients by per capita wealth (GNI) for all refugees, without Ukrainian refugees, 2010-2024

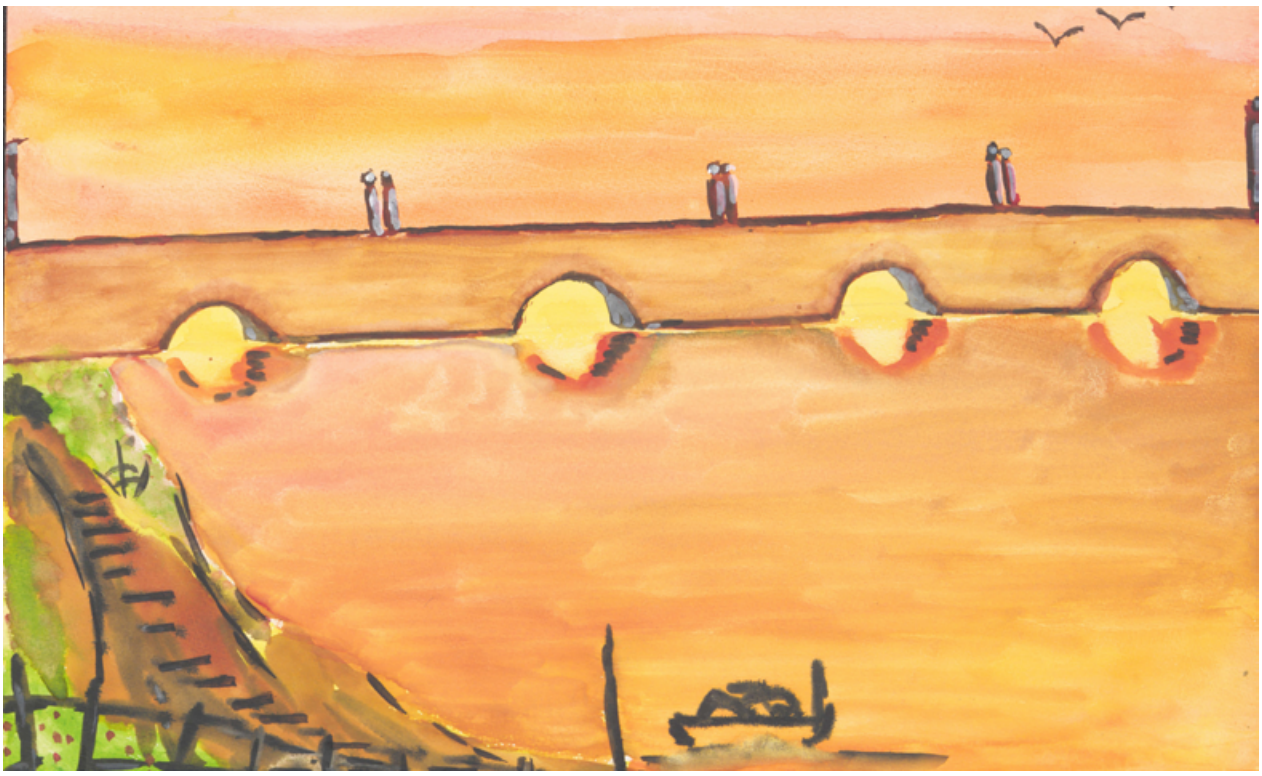


The Gini coefficient is derived from the Lorenz Curve, which arranges host countries from the poorest to the richest and illustrates the cumulative share of refugees each segment of global wealth is hosting. In 2024, 80 per cent of the world's refugee population was hosted by countries that collectively represented only 27 per cent of global wealth. This figure has more than quadrupled over the past decade, indicating a modest increase in the share of global wealth among countries hosting the majority of refugees. However, it remains evident that a small fraction of global wealth continues to bear the bulk of the responsibility (see Figure 7).

This forward movement in responsibility-sharing is further reflected in the progress towards realizing the four objectives of the GCR, where notable, albeit sometimes gradual and uneven, advances have been achieved. Each indicator illustrates both the concrete advancements made and the ongoing challenges that persist in fulfilling the international community's commitments under the GCR. Ultimately, these efforts underscore that supporting refugees and host communities is a shared responsibility—one that demands sustained commitment and collaboration across borders, across all sectors of society, and, most importantly, with refugees themselves.

Figure 7: Cumulative global wealth hosting 80 per cent of the world's refugee population, 2010-2024





A drawing by a 14-year-old from Laos, depicting a bridge bathed in sunset hues—a poignant symbol of the passage from the home left behind to the hope of a new home in safety. © UNHCR Archives, Fonds 10c: Children's Drawings (1970–2000)

Objective 1: Ease pressure on host countries

Outcome 1.1: Resources supporting additional instruments and programmes are made available for refugees and host communities by an increasing number of donors

Official Development Assistance (ODA) for refugee situations in low- and middle-income countries amounted to USD 27.7 billion in 2022-2023, but signs of a downturn emerge amidst confirmed and projected cuts.

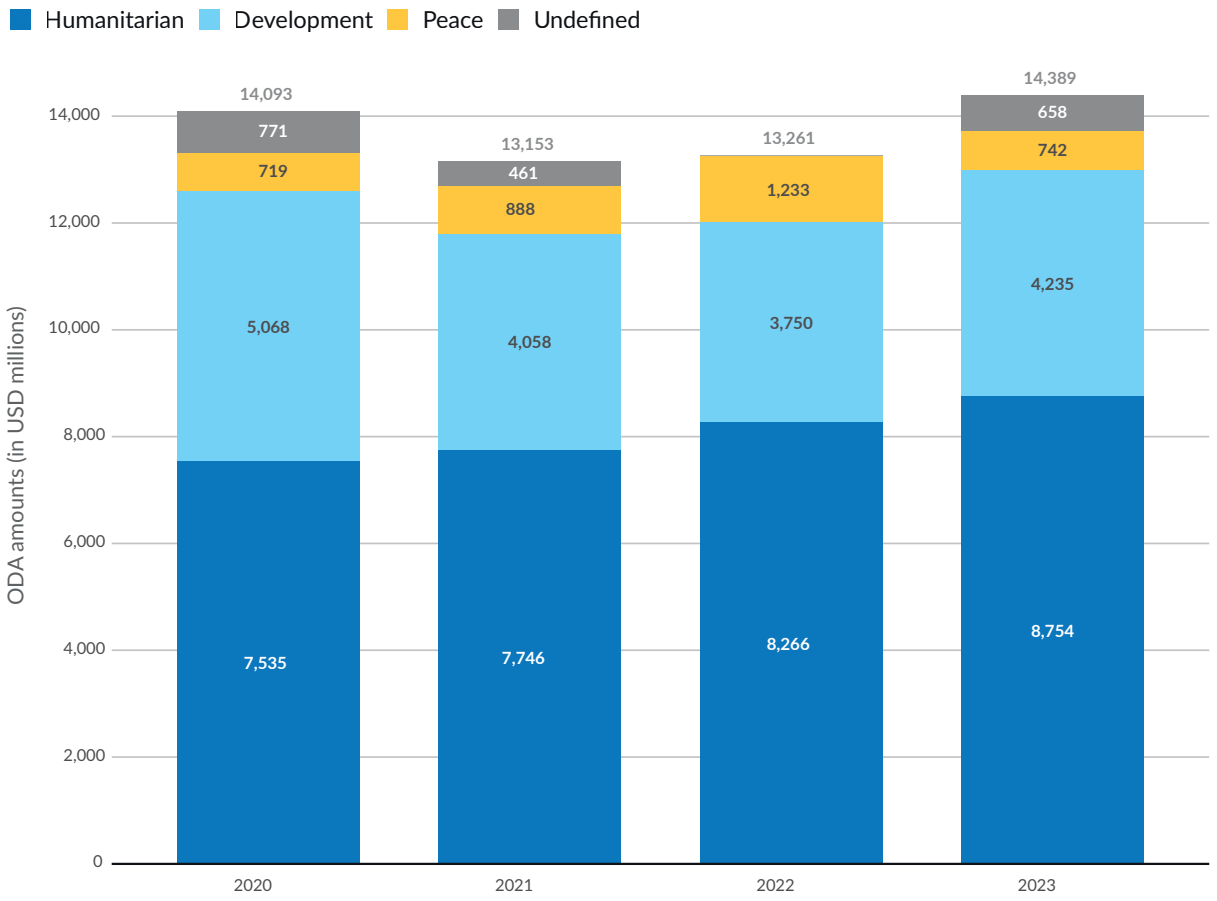
The overall ODA[21] for refugee situations in low- and middle-income countries (LICs and MICs) remained stable between 2020 (USD 14.1 billion) and 2023 (USD 14.4 billion). The overall ODA for refugee situations comprises the total volume of ODA financing for refugees and host communities in refugee-hosting countries (GCR indicator 1.1.1) and for refugee returnees in the countries of origin (GCR indicator 4.1.1).

Looking at the annual trend from 2020 to 2023, funding decreased by 6.7 per cent in 2021, increased slightly by 0.7 per cent in 2022 and increased significantly by 8.7 per cent in 2023. Compared to the overall ODA, which increased by 19.5 per cent from 2020 (USD 241.8 billion) to 2023 (USD 288.9 billion), the ODA for refugee situations only increased by 2.2 per cent. When compared to available data on military spending, the USD 14.4 billion in ODA allocated to refugee situations in 2023 was approximately 190 times less than the USD 2.7 trillion spent globally on military expenditure in 2024. *"The growing military expenditure is crowding out resources essential for social investment, poverty reduction, education, health, environmental protection, and infrastructure"*— including those related to refugee situations— despite evidence that increased military spending does not necessarily lead to greater peace or stability.[22]

Between 2020 and 2023, donors allocated a total of USD 54.9 billion for refugee situations in LICs and MICs, accounting for 5.2 per cent of the total ODA allocated to these situations. An additional

USD 692 million was allocated as other official flows (OOF) from 2020 to 2023.[23] Humanitarian assistance consistently represented the largest share of ODA allocated to refugee situations, accounting for 53 per cent in 2020 and increased to 61 per cent in 2023. In contrast, development-related support relatively remained at similar levels, reflecting challenges in securing predictable, long-term financing (see Figure 8). This risks undermining efforts to deliver sustainable solutions, particularly for protracted refugee situations.

Figure 8: Total ODA for refugee situations, by Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) components, 2020-2023, USD disbursements in 2023 constant prices, Millions



Data beyond 2023 is not yet available (see Note on Data Sources and Methodology). However, early projections indicate a potential decline in ODA for refugee situations. According to OECD estimates, current trends for total ODA suggest a decrease of around 9 per cent in 2024 and a further drop of 9 to 17 per cent in 2025. These foreseen reductions are linked to announced cuts by four major donors: France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, which collectively contributed 40 per cent of all ODA to refugee situations in LICs and MICs in 2023.[24] If ODA for refugee situations in LICs and MICs follows broader ODA trends and projections, the ODA for refugee situations is expected to decrease by 9 per cent to USD 13.10 billion in 2024. And may fall further to USD 11.9 billion (a nine per cent lower cut) and USD 10.9 billion (a 17 per cent higher cut) in 2025. Under this overall projected reduction, funding for the humanitarian sector is expected to shrink significantly, ranging from a 21 per cent decrease (lower cut) to a 36 per cent decrease (higher cut). These estimates are based on the latest available OECD preliminary data on total ODA for 2024 and projections for 2025. The OECD notes that the outlook beyond 2025 remains highly uncertain.[25]

In response, there is an urgent need to sustain available ODA financing, maximize coordination between donors on allocation decisions to ensure

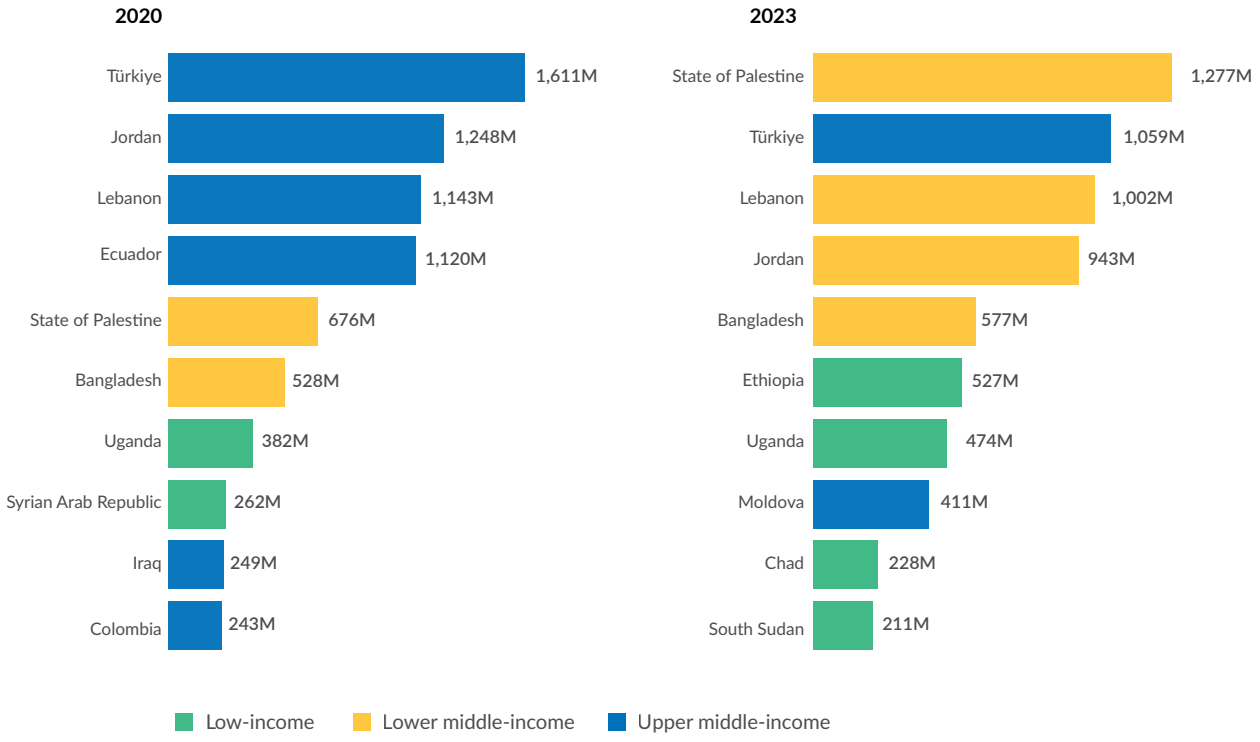
better efficiency and unlock the full potential of additional funding sources. This includes further engaging the private sector and enhancing South-South cooperation to provide more inclusive and sustainable support for refugees.

USD 52.9 billion ODA was allocated to support refugees and host communities in LICs and MICs in 2020-2023, but funding remained unevenly distributed.

Between 2020 and 2023, donors (excluding UN entities) allocated USD 52.9 billion to support refugees and host communities in LICs and MICs (GCR indicator 1.1.1). In 2020, Türkiye, which hosted the largest number of refugees worldwide that year, received the highest aid at USD 1.6 billion. Jordan received USD 1.2 billion, Lebanon and Ecuador each received USD 1.1 billion. However, some of the largest hosting countries in that year, for example, Pakistan (hosted 1.4 million refugees) and Sudan (hosted 1 million refugees), both LICs, were not among the largest recipients of ODA to support refugees and host communities. In 2023, the State of Palestine (USD 1.3 billion), Türkiye (USD 1.1 billion), Lebanon (USD 1 billion), and Jordan (USD 943 million) were the largest recipients of ODA. However, some of the largest refugee-hosting countries that year, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran (hosted 3.8 million refugees) and Peru (hosted 1.1 million refugees and other people in need of international protection), both upper MICs, were not among the largest recipients of ODA for refugee situations (see Figure 9).[26]

Between 2020 and 2023, the largest recipients were predominantly low and lower middle-income countries, rather than upper middle-income countries. This distribution suggests an improvement in burden- and responsibility-sharing with LICs and LMICs—many of which face constraints such as limited state capacity and reduced fiscal space.

Figure 9: Largest recipients of ODA to support refugees and host communities, 2020 and 2023, USD disbursements in 2023 constant prices, Millions



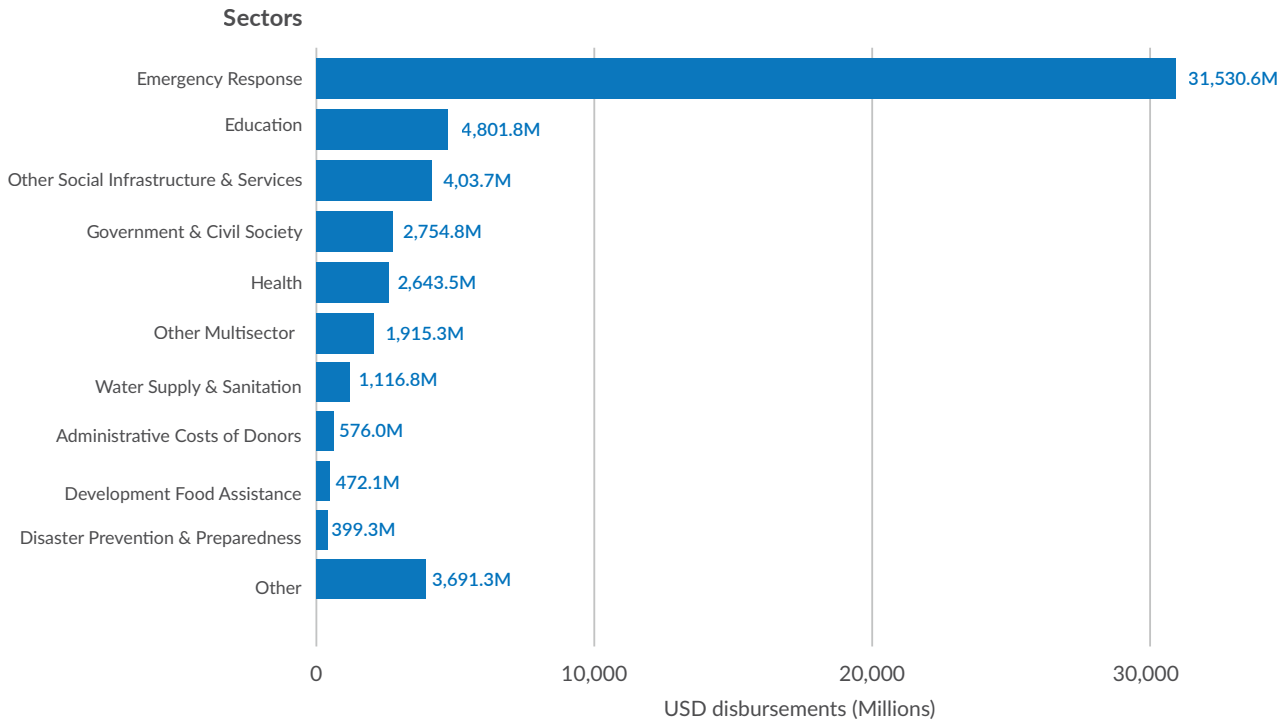
The sectoral allocation of ODA for refugee situations (GCR indicators 1.1.1 and 4.1.1) also reveals significant imbalances between 2020 and 2023 (see Figure 10). The bulk of the support—USD 31.5 billion, or 57 per cent of the total—was directed towards emergency response.[27] In contrast, critical sectors that support long-term development and resilience received far less:

- Education received USD 4.8 billion, Health received USD 2.6 billion, and Other social Infrastructure and Services received USD 4 billion.
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing received USD 191 million; Energy received USD 106 million; General Environmental Protection received USD 22 million; Industry, Mining, and Construction received USD 54 million; and Banking and Financial Services received USD 21 million.
- Reconstruction and rehabilitation received USD 370 million.
- Conflict, peace and security received USD 956 million.

These allocation patterns remained essentially unchanged between 2020 and 2023, indicating persistent disparities. Despite the importance of adopting a Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus approach, funding remains concentrated in short-term humanitarian assistance, with limited investment in sectors that address root causes and facilitate sustainable solutions.

This narrow focus on emergency response leaves other critical areas—such as refugee self-reliance and host community resilience—relatively underfunded, posing a barrier to achieving the objectives of the Compact. While this analysis is based on available disaggregated data on ODA for refugee situations only and does not capture all forms of assistance, it provides valuable insights into funding gaps and the effectiveness of current financing strategies. Addressing these gaps requires a more coordinated and needs-based approach, ensuring that resources are directed where they are most needed to support both immediate needs and long-term solutions. This is essential for a more effective and equitable response, as well as to reduce pressure on host countries.

Figure 10: ODA for refugee situations, by largest sector, 2020-2023, USD disbursements in 2023 constant prices, Millions



Donor engagement has grown since 2020, but over half of the funding came from just three providers.

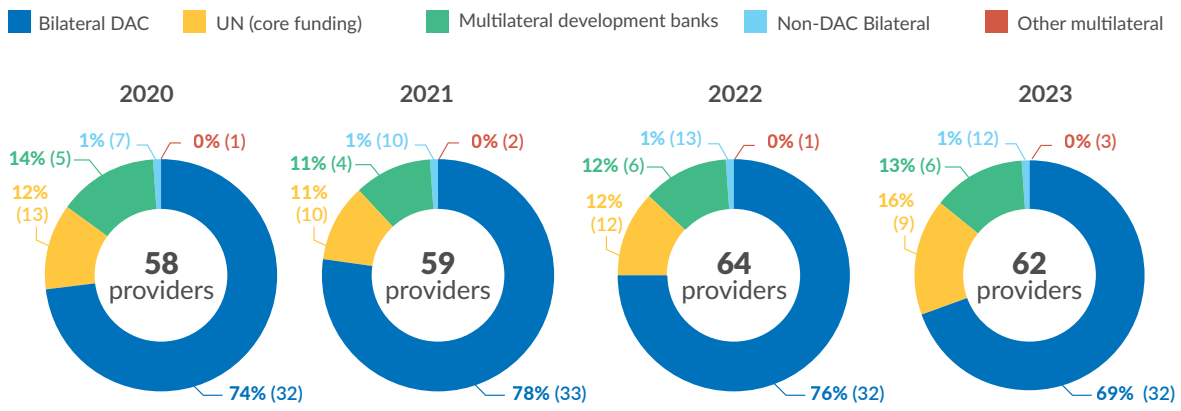
The number of donors, excluding UN entities, who reported ODA allocations for the benefit of refugees and host communities (GCR indicator 1.1.2) has grown modestly, increasing from 45 in 2020 to 53 in 2023. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members remained the most represented group, followed by non-DAC countries, and a small number of multilateral development banks and other donor organizations (see Figure 11). In 2022, DAC members agreed on a methodology to track development finance for refugee situations in LICs and MICs using a keyword-based approach integrated into the regular development finance reporting process. Although this approach has only been in use for a few years, improvements in reporting have already been noted. As the methodology continues to be applied and refined, it is expected to yield a more comprehensive understanding of the support provided by these actors to refugee situations.

DAC members also provided the bulk of resources, accounting for more than two-thirds of total disbursements each year, USD 9.99 billion in 2020 and USD 9.6 billion in 2023. The contributions from multilateral development banks remained stable with 14 per cent of the total contributions in 2020 (USD 1.9 billion) to 13 per cent in 2023 (USD 1.8 billion). The contribution from non-DAC countries remained limited, representing just 1.1 per cent in 2020 and 1.5 per cent in 2023, USD 147 million and USD 207 million, respectively (see Figure 11). The low engagement from non-DAC countries may be due to underreporting, as most countries do not report to the OECD, or to low mobilization efforts. Improving both reporting and mobilization from these countries is crucial to ensure their support for refugee responses is fully accounted for and recognized.

The number of United Nations entities, including UNHCR and UNRWA, that received unearmarked core funding to support refugees and host communities in LICs and MICs decreased slightly from 13 in 2020 to 9 in 2023. However, the proportion of the ODA channelled as core contributions to these entities increased from 12 per cent in 2020 (USD 1.6 billion) to 16 per cent (USD 2.2 billion) in 2023. For UNHCR specifically, total core contributions increased from USD 598 million in 2020 to USD 685 million in 2023.

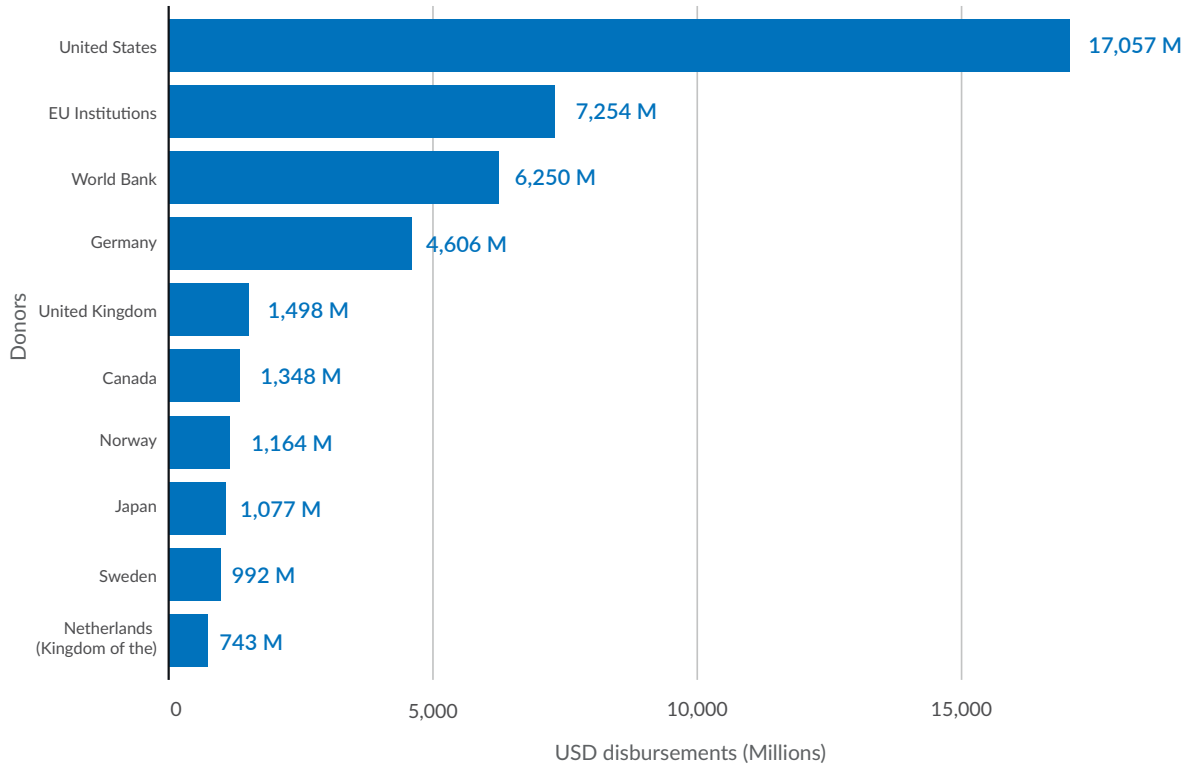
Moving to a more specific analysis using a different dataset on all the latest available funding for UNHCR—both core contributions and other types of funding—a more concerning picture emerges. By June 2025, available funds totalled USD 2.5 billion—covering just 23 per cent of global needs, down from 44 per cent in 2024. As a result, UNHCR has reduced its activities and workforce by about one-third, cutting USD 1.4 billion in programmes and limiting its ability to support those in need. Urgent international solidarity and flexible funding are needed to safeguard decades of progress.[28]

Figure 11: Number of donors and share of ODA to support refugees and host communities, by type of financial provider, 2020-2023



At the individual donor level, the three largest donors (the United States of America, EU Institutions and the World Bank) accounted for over half of the total ODA for refugee hosting situations (see Figure 11), with the United States alone accounting for nearly one-third (32 per cent) of the total between 2020 and 2023. In contrast, the combined contribution of the bottom 50 donors, who account for two-thirds of all donors, amounted to less than 3 per cent, highlighting the stark concentration of funding. The World Bank was the largest multilateral donor, contributing 12 per cent of the overall funding (USD 6.25 billion) and representing 95 per cent of all multilateral contributions (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Largest donors of ODA to support refugees and host communities, 2020-2023, USD disbursements in 2023 constant prices, Millions, excluding core funding to United Nations entities



Sharp increase in domestic spending for hosting refugees in high-income countries ('in-donor refugee costs') shifts ODA balance.

The dollar value of in-donor refugee costs more than tripled, rising from USD 9.7. billion in 2020 to USD 33.3 billion in 2023, primarily driven by the surge of refugees from Ukraine arriving in donor countries since February 2022. In-donor refugee costs refer to the expenses incurred by donor countries for the first 12 months of support to refugees or asylum-seekers within their borders. Under OECD DAC rules, these costs are counted as ODA to reflect the financial effort of hosting refugees and to promote responsibility-sharing with LICs and MICs, which continue to host the vast majority of the world's refugees.[29]

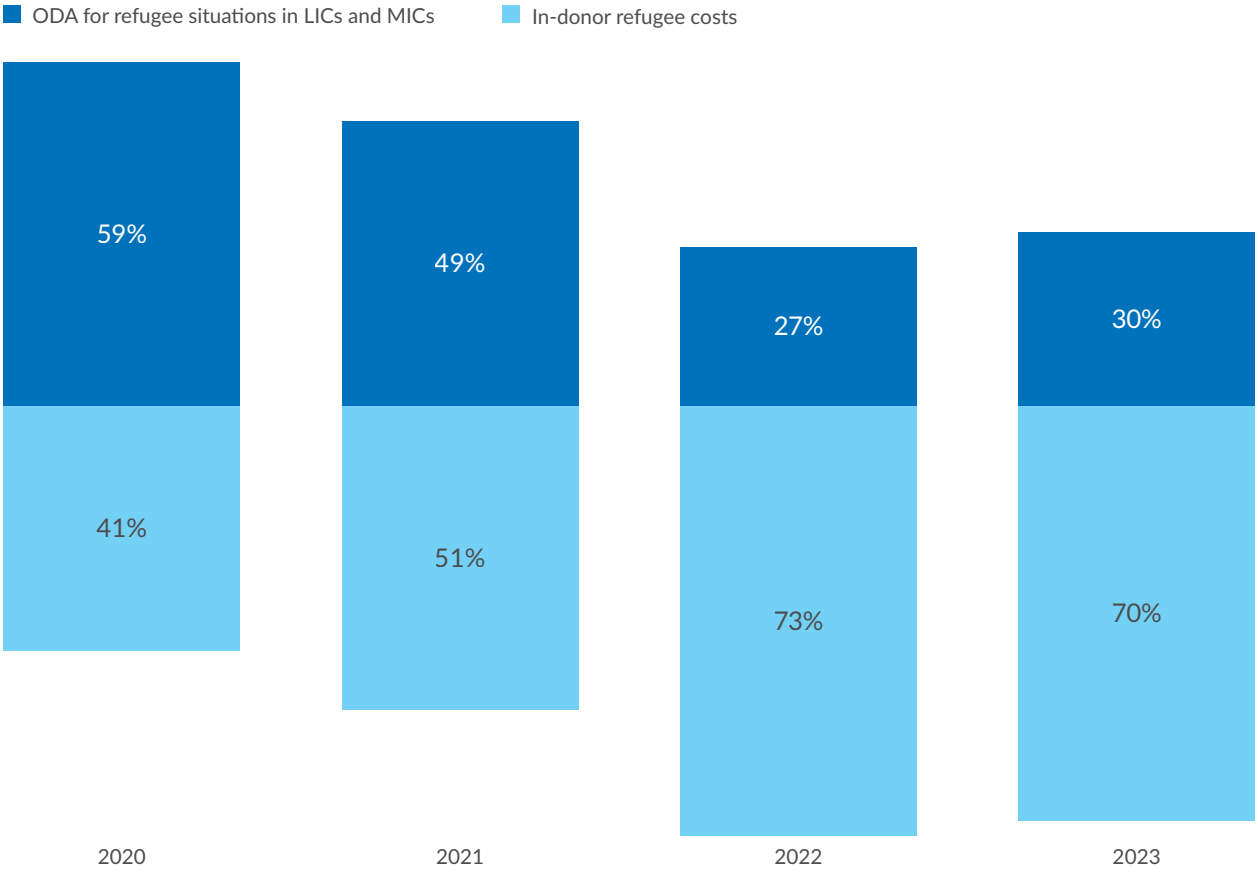
However, in-donor refugee costs have become the largest component of ODA to refugee situations, accounting for 70 per cent of the total in 2023. By contrast, only 30 per cent of ODA was directed to support refugee situations in LICs and MICs, which host most of the world's refugees (see Figure 13). This trend underscores a widening gap between current ODA allocations and the imperative for more equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing. Since in-donor refugee costs include only those for the first year of support to refugees, the reported amounts may decrease in subsequent years.

Already, preliminary data for 2024 indicate a possible reversal of this trend; ODA for in-donor refugee costs decreased by 17.3 per cent in 2024

compared to 2023, amounting to USD 27.8 billion. This represented 13.1 per cent of DAC member countries' total ODA, down from 14.6 per cent in 2023.

However, for five DAC-member countries, in-donor refugee costs still represented more than a quarter of their ODA in 2024.[30]

Figure 13: Share of ODA for refugee situations and in-donor refugee costs, 2020-2023



Reflections on the costs and benefits of hosting refugees: inclusion as the way forward

Inclusion mitigates the costs

Hosting refugees entails significant fiscal costs, particularly for low- and middle-income countries where most refugees reside. These costs cover essential public services, including health, education, food, shelter, and other basic needs. Despite limited resources, many host countries have demonstrated remarkable adaptive capacity and a tremendous commitment extending essential services to refugees, even under considerable economic pressure. These countries are not only absorbing substantial financial burdens but are also playing a vital role in promoting regional stability and global solidarity.

However, current funding gaps threaten both the ability to meet immediate needs and to build long-term resilience. In this context, there is an urgent need for more cost-effective and impactful spending. By allowing refugees to integrate into the local economy and society, and by including them in national systems such as education, healthcare, and other social protection services, resources are used more efficiently, helping those who need them most. A joint initiative by UNHCR and the World Bank on measuring the impact of hosting, protecting and assisting refugees has shown that integrating refugees into local economies and national systems reduces costs and encourages investment that benefits everyone. When refugees can work and participate in the economy, they rely less on aid, freeing up resources that can be reinvested in the host country. If refugees around the world could work at the same rate as nationals, it is estimated that the cost of providing complementary assistance to refugees would decrease from USD 22 billion to USD 6 billion each year, resulting in USD 16 billion in annual savings (Figure 14).[31]

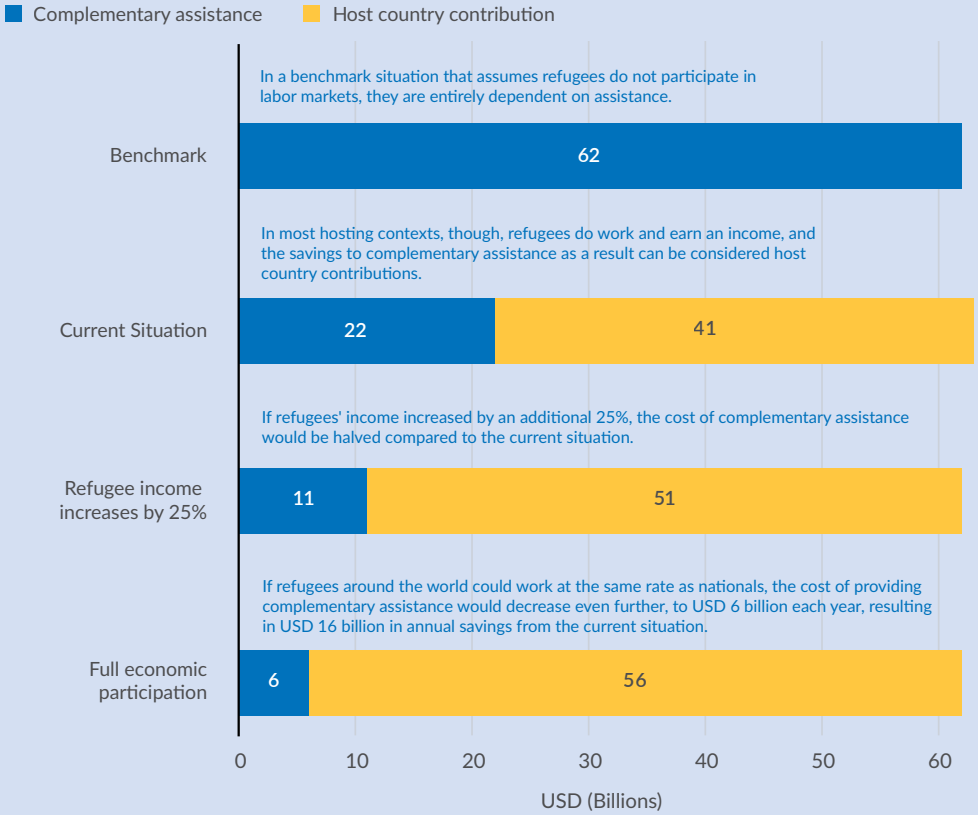


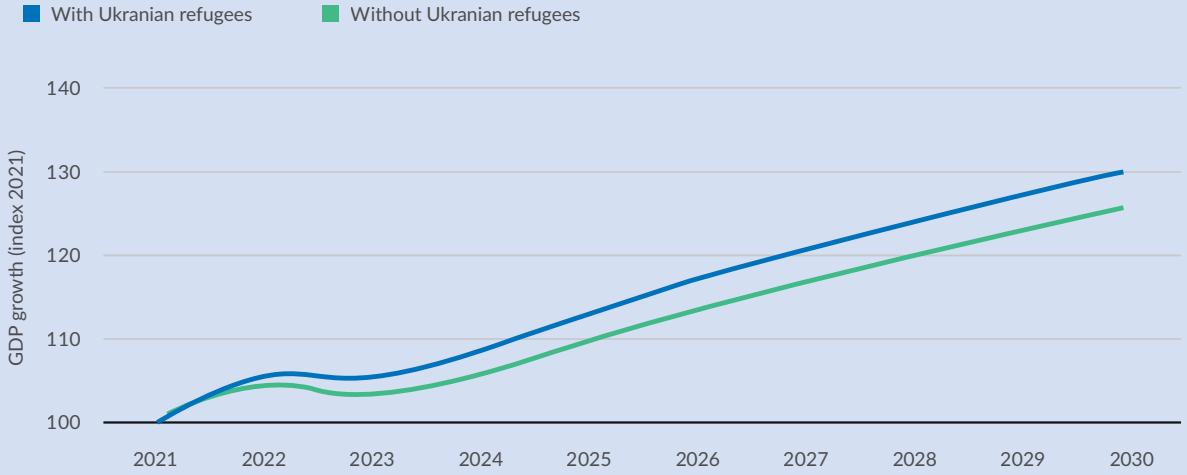
Figure 14: Cost of refugee basic needs under various economic participation scenarios[32]

Economic participation maximizes the benefits

Inclusive hosting policies not only cost less and improve outcomes for refugees, but they also bring tangible economic and social benefits to host countries. Refugees spend money, pay taxes, work, and start businesses, which increases demand and creates jobs. Many arrive with skills and ideas that help drive innovation and productivity. In Kenya, for example, refugees are estimated to have contributed a 3.4 per cent increase in the host region's (Turkana county) GDP, created jobs, and improved health and education services.[33] In Colombia, temporary protection granted to refugees and migrants has

expanded the labour force, increased consumption and tax revenues, and helped fill key labour gaps.[34] In Poland, integrating Ukrainian refugees into the labour market has contributed to a GDP growth of up to 2.7 per cent and generated billions in additional public revenue (see Figure 15).[35] These contributions help local economies thrive and support long-term growth and development.

Figure 15: GDP growth paths with and without Ukrainian refugees

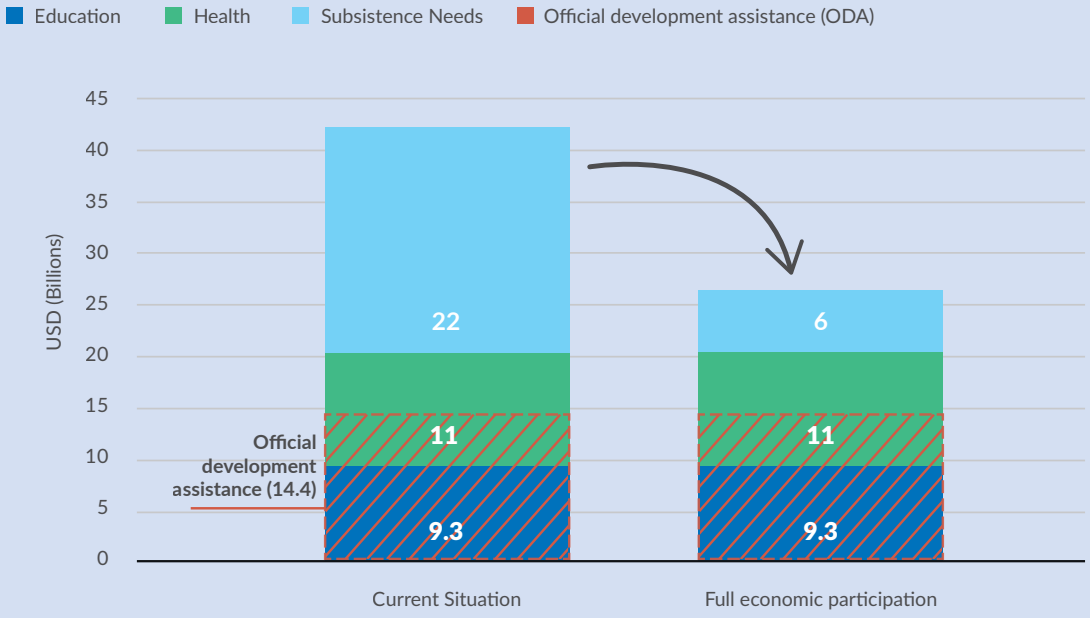


Source: UNHCR & Deloitte (2025). "Poland: Analysis of the impact of refugees from Ukraine on the economy of Poland" — 2nd edition (June 2025).

International cooperation through the GCR still has a role to play

Policies that support economic participation help refugees rely less on aid and build self-reliance. This shift transforms displacement into an opportunity for shared growth and development. However, most refugees live in low- and middle-income countries, where predictable and multi-year international support is still needed for more equitable responsibility-sharing. According to UNHCR and the World Bank, the estimated annual cost of including refugees in national education and health systems in these countries amounts to USD 9.3 billion and USD 11 billion respectively. Meeting refugees' basic needs adds another USD 22 billion each year. Altogether, this is almost three times the USD 14.4 billion of ODA to refugee situations in 2023 (see Figure 16). Even with the potential savings achieved through economic inclusion, a significant though more manageable funding gap remains—one that must be addressed through strengthened international cooperation under the Compact.

Figure 16: Global cost of hosting refugees in LICs and MICs compared to ODA, 2023



Outcome 1.2: National arrangements and coordinated refugee responses are supported

In 2022-2023, only 13 per cent of the ODA for refugee situations in LICs and MICs was channelled to national actors, falling further from the global target for local actors.

The proportion of ODA for the benefit of refugees channelled through national actors (GCR indicator 1.2.1) declined to 13 per cent in 2022-2023, down from 18 per cent in 2020-2021. This proportion does not include ODA channelled through the United Nations and other international organizations and then transferred to national actors, as the channel of delivery is the first implementing partner. A reduction in local government involvement primarily drove the decline. This downward trend raises concerns about the level of support provided to strengthen the capacity of national actors—including recipient governments, the local private sector entities, and NGOs based in low- and middle-income countries—who play a central role in refugee response. Notably, the share of funding channelled directly through national actors remains well below the target agreed by major donors and aid organizations under the Grand Bargain, which called for at least 25 per cent of global humanitarian funding to be provided "as directly as possible" to local and national responders by 2020. The continued decline signals increased challenges for achieving sustainable and locally led responses, given the critical role of national actors in implementation.

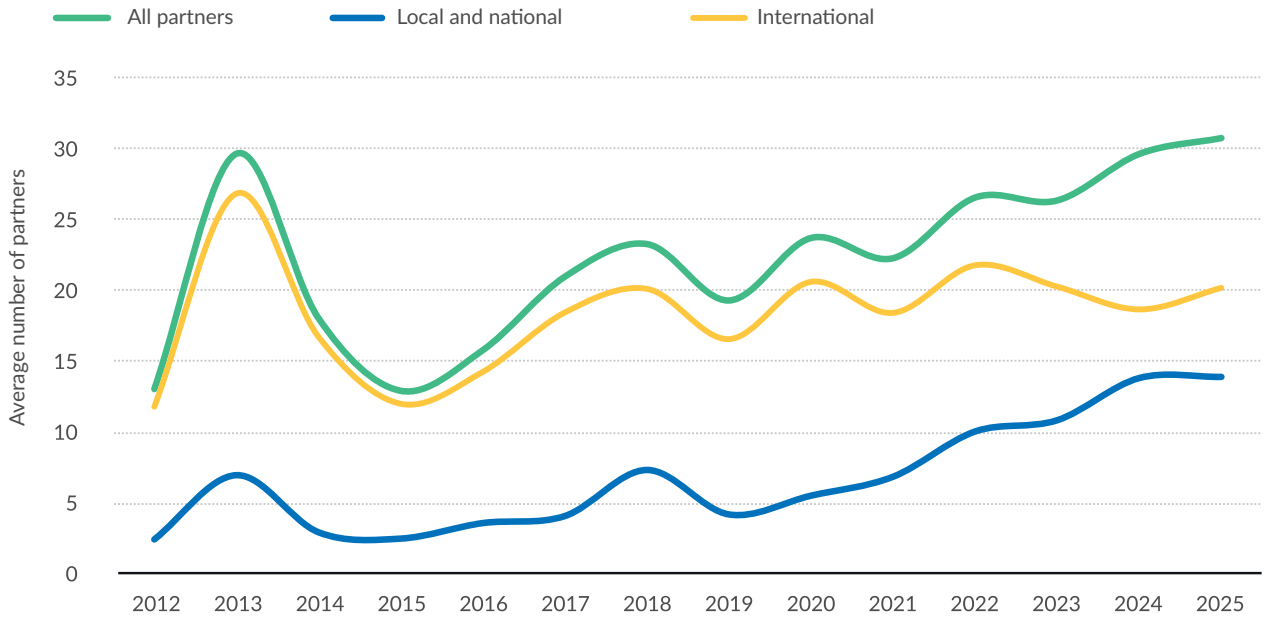
Shifting focus to an analysis using a different dataset, which includes UNHCR partners, a different picture emerges. UNHCR distributed USD 1.2 billion in 2024, through 1,383 partners in 115 operations, with 87 per cent of these partners being local or national organizations. Local and national actors received USD 694 million—58 per cent of all partnership funding and 24 per cent of total programme spending. UNHCR expanded its Grant Agreement approach, supporting 285 partners (including 58 women-led and 16 youth-led organizations) and promoting inclusive, community-based engagement. Since 2021, nearly 474 grant agreements have been signed, highlighting UNHCR's commitment to localization and direct support for refugee- and stateless-led initiatives.[36] Such data should be made available by relevant actors in a more systematic manner.

Refugee Response Plans' local partnerships continued to rise in 2025, driving inclusive and nationally-led solutions.

Refugee Response Plans (RRPs) have expanded to encompass a broader range of partners that assist governments in supporting refugees and the communities that host them. RRPs are established either at the country or regional level and help implement the Compact by fostering collaboration among various groups, referred to as the "multi-stakeholder and partnership" approach. They set out clear priorities across different sectoral responses, aligning with national plans, and enhancing coordination.

In 2025, UNHCR coordinates or co-coordinates[37] eight Regional RRPs: Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, and Ukraine RRPs, the Bangladesh Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis (JRP), the Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), and the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Venezuelans (RMRP). Between 2012 and 2025, the number and diversity of partners in RRPs grew markedly. The total number of RRP partners (GCR indicator 1.2.2) in 2025 reached 1,599 across 50 countries that host refugees. While international actors remain a significant part of RRPs, there has been a 14 per cent increase in the average number of national and local actors listed in the RRPs, per plan and per location, from 2.5 partners in 2012 to 13.9 partners in 2025 (see Figure 17), in line with the localization agenda. In 2012, on average, national and local actors represented 5.5 per cent of partners listed in the regional RRPs, but by 2025, this had increased to 34.6 per cent. Some of the strongest examples are the Afghanistan Regional RRP, the Rohingya JRP and Syria 3RP, where over 25 per cent of partners were national and local actors (see Figure 18).

Figure 17: Average number of partners listed in Refugee Response Plans, per plan and per location, 2012-2025

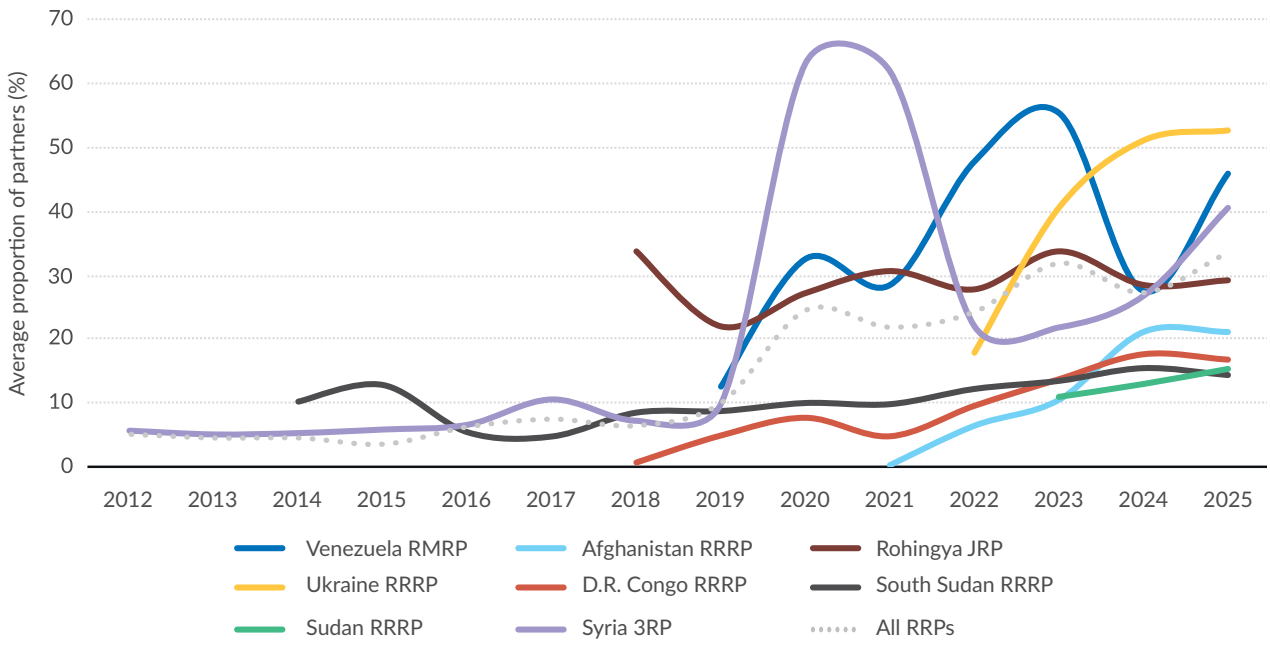


Note: "Location" refers to a specific country or defined target region.

Between 2020 and 2025, data show that women-led, refugee-led, youth-led, faith-based, and organizations led by persons with disabilities are assuming a larger role in RRPs. These groups have become increasingly involved each year, resulting in more inclusive and better-matched responses to the needs of the affected people. For example, women-led organizations made up just 1.5 per cent of RRPs in 2020, but this rose to 6.6 per cent by 2025. Faith-based and refugee-led organizations are now consistently included in RRPs.

As RRPs bring in more diverse partners, they have improved joint advocacy, attracted more resources, and provided better protection and solutions. RRPs bring together international, national, and community-based organizations under a single strategic plan, building broader support for helping refugees. They also reinforce the principles of the GCR, to work with the whole of society to include and empower forcibly displaced people. This approach also leverages the significant commitments and pledges announced at the recent GRF.

Figure 18: Average proportion of national or local partners in selected Refugee Response Plans, per plan and per location, 2012-2025



Note: "Location" refers to a specific country or defined target region.

The "Bird of Peace" mural was created with refugee youth from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, alongside host community participants, in the Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement in northern Uganda. This initiative connected communities through training in virtual reality, digital design, and mural creation across Uganda, Czech Republic, Indonesia, and Algeria. © ARTOLUTION, UNHCR Uganda, Office of the Prime Minister Uganda, UNHCR Innovation Service. Photo and mural credit: Esero Nalyong.

Objective 2: Enhance refugee self-reliance

Outcome 2.1: Refugees are able to actively participate in the social and economic life of host countries

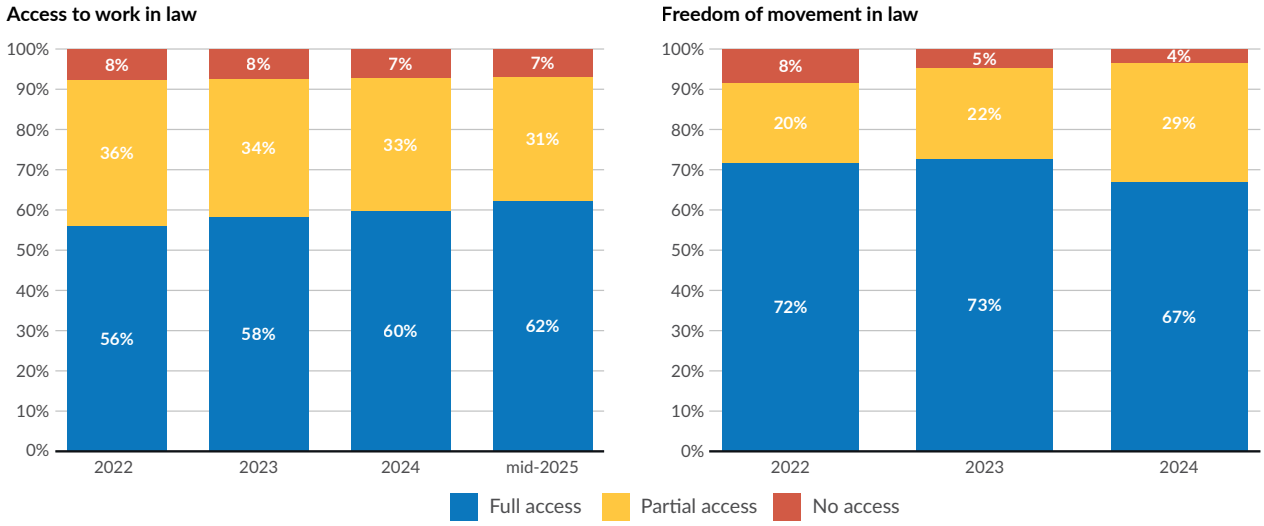
In 2024, six out of ten refugees were legally allowed to work and move freely.

By June 2025, approximately 62 per cent of refugees in 96 countries, covering 33 million refugees, had full access in law to the labour market (GCR indicator 2.1.1; see Figure 19).[38] This marks a modest increase since 2022, driven in part by a rise in the number of refugees in high-income countries, where the law is often more favourable than in low- and middle-income countries. Some countries have amended their laws and policies to enable more refugees to secure work, be self-employed, or find wage-paid employment. Importantly, several countries have taken proactive steps to improve access to formal employment.

For example, Ethiopia adopted *Directive No. 1019/2024*, which operationalized the right of recognized refugees and asylum-seekers to work. Meanwhile, Zambia launched a National Refugee Policy and Implementation Plan, which aims to advance socio-economic inclusion of refugees, including access to employment and livelihoods.[39]

While the legal right to work is a critical foundation, its impact is limited without the freedom of movement. Refugees must be able to travel within their host countries to seek employment, engage in self-employment, and build self-reliance. Restrictions on mobility can severely limit these opportunities. Based on the same 96 countries, between 2022 and 2024, the proportion of refugees supported by a legal framework on mobility (GCR indicator 2.1.2) declined slightly—from 72 per cent to 67 per cent (see Figure 19).

Figure 19: Proportion of refugees with access to work in law and freedom of movement in law, 2022-2024 (year-on-year) and mid-2025



Access to formal employment remained stable from 2023 to mid-2025, with barriers persisting.

In practice, access to formal employment for refugees remained stable overall but uneven across countries. While some contexts saw improvements, these were offset by deteriorations elsewhere. Some 47 per cent of refugees hosted in the same 96 countries had unrestricted access to formal employment in practice. This has remained stable from 2023 to mid-2025 (see Figure 20).

Recent advancements in inclusive legal and policy environments have contributed to improved access to formal employment for refugees. For example, Mexico's Local Integration Programme has successfully supported over 160,000 refugees to achieve socioeconomic inclusion, including access to formal employment opportunities with more than 600 companies. This initiative has generated significant tax revenue and demonstrated the broader economic benefits of refugee inclusion.[40]

Despite positive developments, many refugees continue to face administrative and practical barriers to access formal employment. These include delays in issuing or renewing identification documents, non-recognition of refugee credentials by employers and financial institutions, and high costs associated with residence and work permits. These administrative hurdles, compounded by complex procedures for securing residence and work permits, continue to limit refugees' access to formal employment.

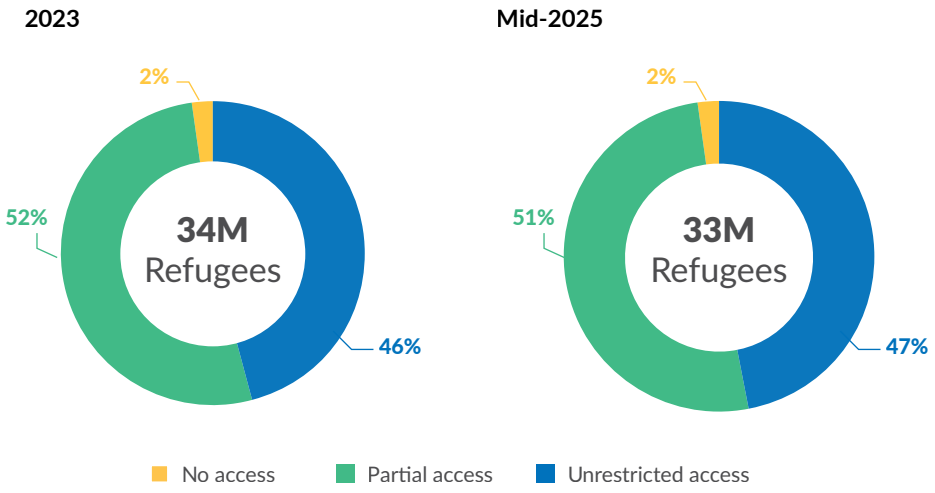
Refugee women face additional gender-specific barriers, such as unpaid care responsibilities, restrictive and discriminatory gender norms, limited access to safe and affordable transportation, and heightened risks of gender-based violence during commutes or at the workplace. These factors further constrain their participation in the labour market.

Refugee employment is shaped by the host country's labour market conditions and regulatory environment. Refugees often work in low-skilled, informal sectors like agriculture, construction, and domestic work, where exploitation risks, including trafficking for forced labour, are high. Social exclusion, xenophobia, and misinformation further hinder inclusion. Many refugees face digital and financial exclusion due to limited access to recognized identification, bank accounts, or mobile money services, digital literacy barriers (especially for women), and often struggle with non-recognition of their qualifications and skills, which restricts access to decent work. While some countries have improved recognition of refugee IDs and support for entrepreneurship, progress remains uneven. Without targeted investment in connectivity,

skills development, and labour protections, digital livelihoods may deepen existing inequalities.

Due to the limited availability of national labour force data on refugee employment, this analysis relied on expert assessments provided by UNHCR staff based on operational knowledge and consultations with forcibly displaced and stateless people. Improving data availability at the national level, including through the statistical inclusion of refugees, would help clarify how refugee employment outcomes compare to those of host communities.

Figure 20: Proportion of refugees with access in practice to formal employment, 2023 and mid-2025



From displacement to determination: Yasin's journey and Ethiopia's refugee inclusion vision

In the heart of Kebribeyah refugee camp, Yasin Mohamed's story is rewriting what it means to be a refugee in Ethiopia. At 31, Yasin is living proof of what inclusive policies can achieve. His journey from aid dependency to entrepreneurship is a powerful reflection of Ethiopia's commitment to refugee inclusion, backed by bold policy reforms and pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum 2019 and 2023.

Yasin's life in Ethiopia began in 1991, when his family fled the conflict in Somalia and found safety across the border. Growing up in the camp, he watched many of his peers leave through resettlement or onward movement. "I found myself in the middle of nowhere," he says. For years, his family relied on humanitarian aid and his father's modest income from animal brokering. But Yasin had bigger dreams.

The barrier? A lack of legal identity. Without an ID card, Yasin couldn't qualify for financial services,

Yasin Mohamed, Somali refugee at his shop serving both refugees and host community members, Kebribeyah Refugee Camp. © UNHCR/Ali Fille

register a business, or even access electricity. “It affected everything,” he recalls. “I couldn’t get a license, open a bank account, or grow my business.”

That changed in October 2024, when Yasin received his digital identity card, issued under the Ethiopian Digital Identification Proclamation No. 1284/2023 and the Refugee Proclamation No. 1110/2019. These landmark policies, implemented by the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), gave refugees and asylum-seekers access to legal recognition and the right to work, including formal employment, business registration, and financial services. For Yasin, this was a turning point.

With his new ID, Yasin launched a small shop inside his family compound, starting with ETB 20,000 (USD 140) from his father. A loan of ETB 100,000 (USD 700) from INKOMOKO helped him expand, serving both refugees and host community members. “Thanks to the Ethiopian government and UNHCR, I now have the right and privilege to access so many different services,” he says.

Yasin’s success is not just personal, it is policy-driven. His journey was made possible by Ethiopia’s evidence-based reforms, including the 2022–2023 Socio-Economic Survey of Refugees in Ethiopia (SESRE). This nationally representative survey provided critical data on refugee livelihoods, informing Ethiopia’s 2024 Directive on the Right to Work. The directive opened the door for refugees and asylum-seekers to participate more fully in the economy, turning inclusion from principle into practice.

These reforms are part of Ethiopia’s multi-stakeholder pledges made at the GRF 2023, where the government committed to expanding economic inclusion, strengthening social protection, and ensuring refugee inclusion in national statistics. Yasin’s story is living proof of what these pledges mean on the ground.

His message to other refugee youth is clear: “Engage in different works and use the opportunities before you to generate income and become independent from aid dependency.” His voice carries the hope of thousands, proof that when refugees are given the tools to succeed, they don’t just rebuild their lives; they help build stronger, more inclusive societies.

Ethiopia’s approach shows that refugee inclusion is not just a humanitarian imperative, it is a driver of economic growth and social cohesion. By translating the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees into tangible action, Ethiopia is demonstrating what meaningful refugee integration can look like: policies that also unlock human potential, not just protect it. Imagine what this could mean for many others like Yasin.

Outcome 2.2: Refugee and host community self-reliance is strengthened

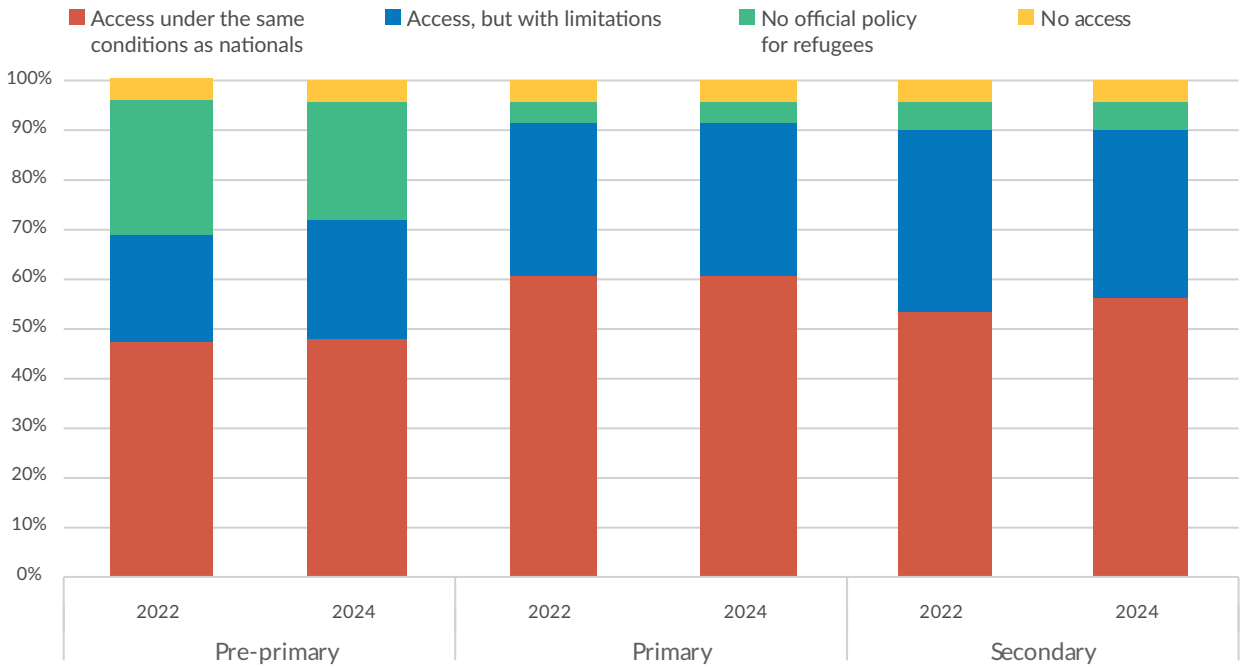
Between 2022 and 2024, more countries adopted inclusive education policies for refugee children.

UNHCR data from 71 country operations show that most countries have laws allowing refugee children to access formal education. Between 2022 and 2024, policies supporting their inclusion in national education systems have improved.[41] Secondary education saw the highest gain, with a three-percentage-point increase—from 53 to 56 per cent of countries that offered equal access as nationals. Primary education remained unchanged, with 61 per cent of reporting countries providing equal access. Pre-primary education increased by two percentage points, from 46 to 48 per cent (see Figure 21).

In 2024, refugee children had legal access to education with limitations in 24 per cent of countries at the pre-primary level, 31 per cent at the primary level, and 34 per cent at the secondary level. Limited access at the primary level has not changed since 2022. At the pre-primary level, 3 per cent more countries had limited access, while fewer countries lack any official policy. This reflects a growing awareness, with more countries guiding entry-level programmes that aim to reduce barriers to entry. For secondary education, there was a two-percentage-point decrease in the number of countries that reported limited access compared to 2022.

Globally, four per cent of countries had no official policy on refugee access to primary education, and six per cent had none for secondary education. At all levels, four per cent of countries still have policies that deny refugee children access to education. These figures have not changed since 2022.

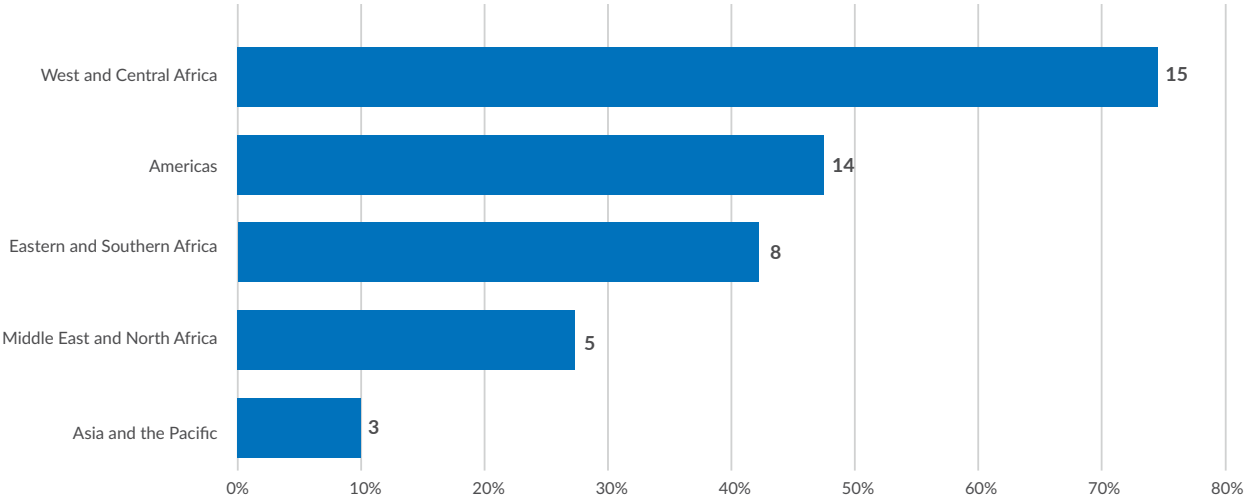
Figure 21: Pre-primary, primary and secondary education inclusion, 2022 to 2024



Examining the data by region (see Figure 22), approximately a quarter of countries, where data were available, reported that refugees can access primary education on the same terms as nationals; however, this varied by region. As in 2022, most countries in West and Central Africa still have policies that support the inclusion of refugees in primary education, such as those governing children's right to access education under the same conditions as nationals, as well as learning under the national primary education curriculum. In Cameroon, for example, the 2023-2030 national strategy for the education and training sector was validated by the government in 2024. This strategy specifically accounts for refugees, which will help reinforce the country's existing inclusive policy.

Since 2022, three more countries in the Middle East and North Africa have reported that refugees can access primary education on the same terms as nationals. In Mauritania, UNHCR and the Ministry of Education have been collaborating since the 2021/22 school year to integrate refugees in urban areas into primary school. Iraq has also expanded its Refugee Education Integration Policy (REIP) to cover all primary school grades between 2022 and 2024. The REIP, developed by the Government of Iraq with support from UNHCR and other partners, aims to provide refugee children with the same quality education as local children by focusing on social cohesion, integration, language learning, access to opportunity, and skills development.

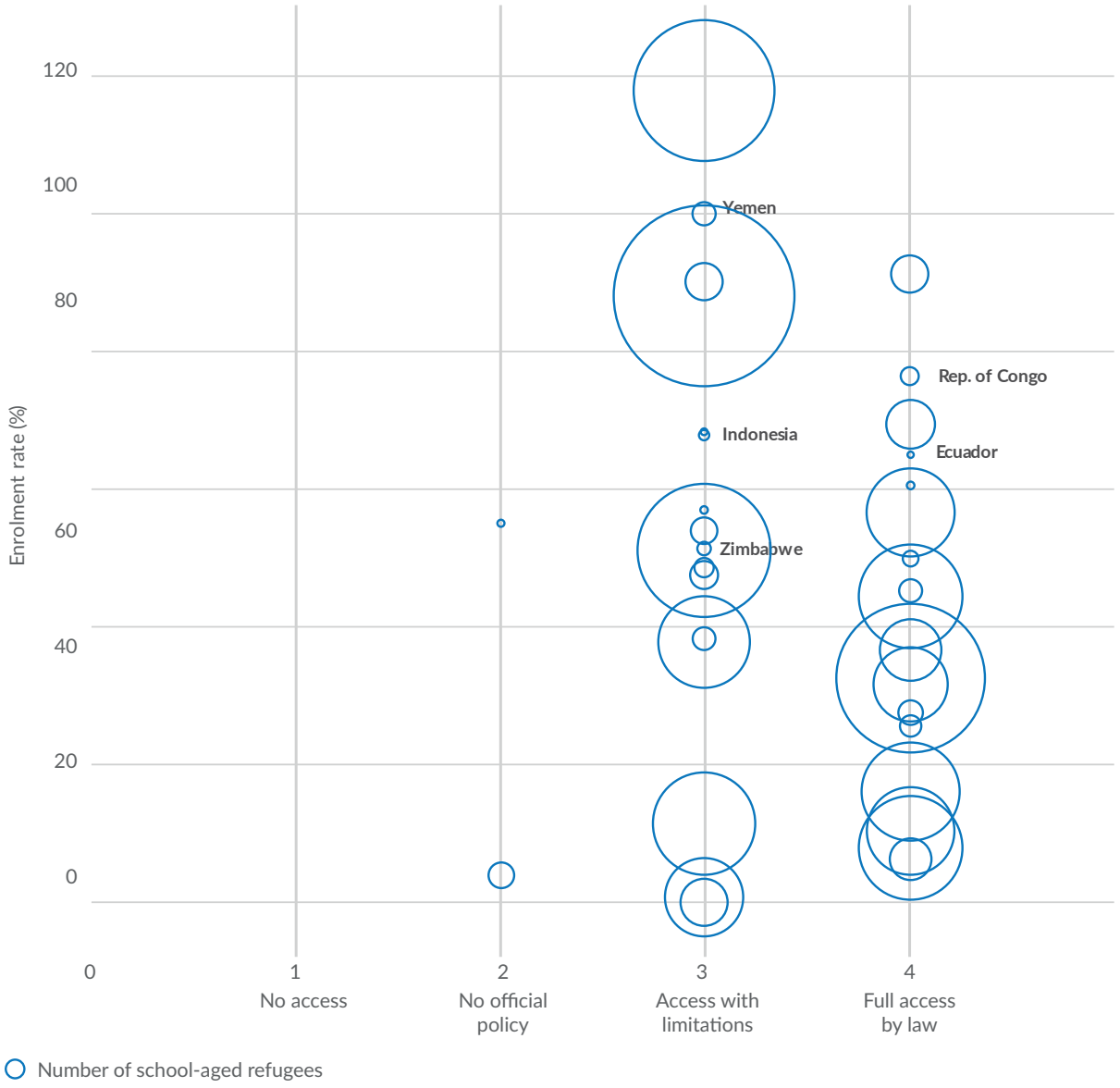
Figure 22: Number and percentage of countries per region that explicitly indicated that refugees could access primary education under the same conditions as nationals, 2024[42]



Nearly half of refugee children enrolled in national schools, but challenges remain.

Data from 48 countries indicate that nearly half (49 per cent) of primary and secondary school-aged refugees were enrolled in national education systems (GCR indicator 2.2.1) as of 2024 – a slight increase from the 48 per cent reported in 2022. While more countries now have inclusive national policies, many still report low refugee enrolment rates (see Figure 23). This suggests that having a legal right to attend school does not always translate into actual access. Implementation depends on how policies are interpreted, whether refugees can obtain the necessary documents, language barriers, indirect schooling costs, and other socio-economic obstacles. Moreover, as more countries integrate refugees into their national education systems, tracking enrolment becomes increasingly difficult. If refugees are not identified in national data collection tools or systems, enrolment rates may appear lower, even if access has not changed. This underscores the importance of improving data systems.

Figure 23: Primary and secondary education inclusion, 2024



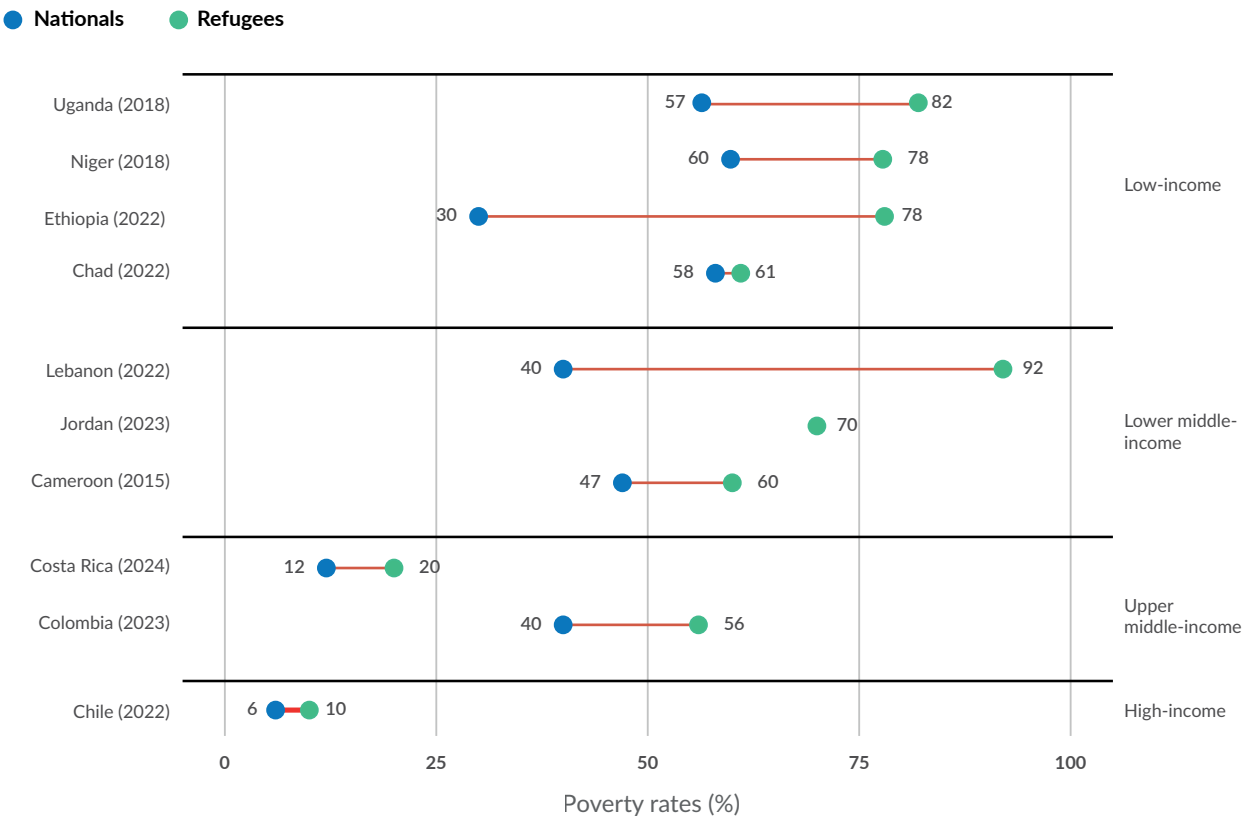
Note: Identified countries are indicated only to reflect examples across different regions.

Refugees consistently face higher poverty rates than host populations, with significant variation across hosting contexts.

In recent years, progress in reducing global poverty has slowed, largely due to compounding shocks, such as conflict and violence. The recovery from COVID-19 has been uneven, and many low-income countries remain trapped in economic stagnation. As a result, extreme poverty in the poorest countries is still higher than it was before the pandemic. Using the recently updated international poverty line of USD 3 per person per day, the World Bank estimates that 808 million people – roughly one in ten globally – now live in extreme poverty. Around half of this population resides in fragile and conflict-affected States, including many refugees who either originate from or are displaced to these areas. With this share expected to increase in the coming years, addressing the root causes of fragility is increasingly urgent.

Credible poverty data on refugees remains limited, but available evidence shows that refugees are more likely to live in poverty than citizens of their host countries (GCR indicator 2.2.2; see Figure 24). These disparities vary across countries, influenced by factors such as levels of development, macroeconomic conditions, and hosting policies that affect refugees' access to income-generating opportunities. In the few cases where within-country comparisons are possible, clear differences emerge between urban and rural refugee populations—highlighting the critical role of vibrant local economies and job opportunities in reducing poverty.

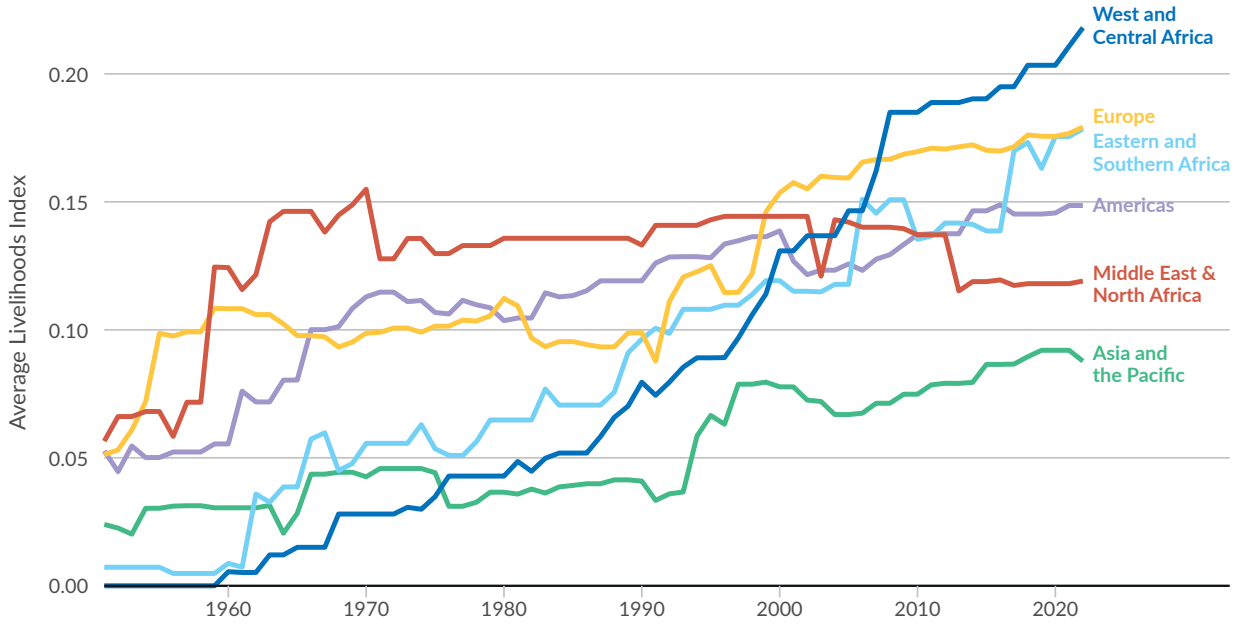
Figure 24: International poverty rates[43], by refugees[44] and nationals (%)



Inclusive work policies reduce refugee poverty and benefit host economies.

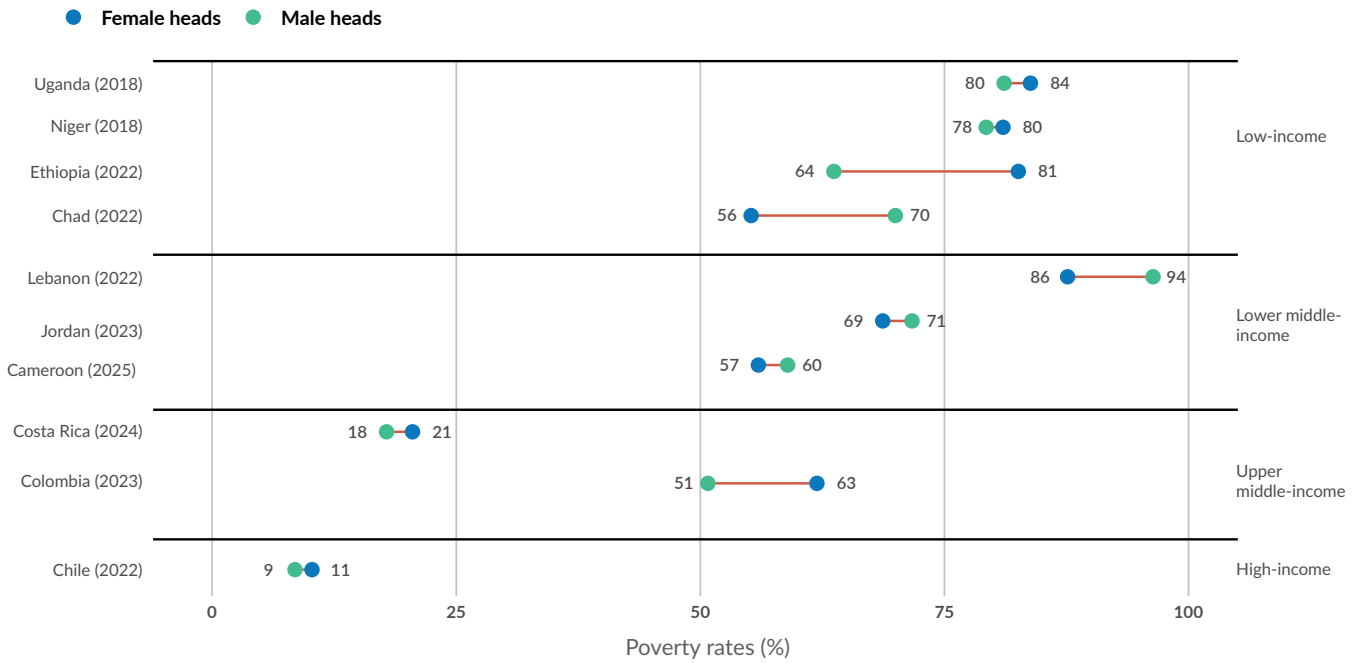
The ability to participate in the local economy is one of the most impactful factors contributing to poverty reduction. Host-country laws and policies that restrict access to formal employment or limit mobility to areas with economic opportunities are consistently associated with higher poverty rates. The Dataset of World Refugee and Asylum Policies (DWRAP) illustrates how *de jure* asylum and refugee policies have evolved across all 193 countries since 1951, including those specifically related to livelihoods. A positive global trend is observed regarding the right to work, with particularly notable progress in host countries across West and Central Africa (see Figure 25). According to available data, households with at least one member employed, typically the head of the household, are less likely to be poor than those with no gainfully employed members. For instance, in Colombia, households with an employed household head are 25 percentage points less likely to be poor relative to those with no employment in the household. When refugees are able to work, they not only improve their own personal circumstances but also support their families and contribute to the host economy.

Figure 25: Dataset of World Refugee and Asylum Policies (DWARP) livelihoods index, by region, 1950-2020



While economic inclusion fosters greater self-reliance, certain groups continue to face specific challenges that require targeted support. Displacement often affects men and women differently, and families are frequently separated. Data show that female-headed refugee households are, on average, poorer than male-headed households, highlighting a persistent gender gap (see Figure 26). Understanding and addressing these gender differences, along with other group-specific challenges, should be a priority for UNHCR and operational partners to ensure that no one is left behind.

Figure 26: Poverty rates of refugees, by gender of household head



With limited resources and competing needs, enabling refugees to become more self-reliant and integrate into the local economy is essential for reducing poverty and fostering prosperity in host communities. Inclusion is both impactful and cost-effective (see text box: *Reflections on the costs and benefits of hosting refugees: inclusion as the way forward*). When refugees earn an income, they rely less on aid, freeing up resources that can be reinvested in the local economy, benefiting both refugees and host communities. This "inclusion dividend" is well-documented in major refugee-hosting contexts, helping to support a balanced, evidence-based policy dialogue on responsibility-sharing.

Mural created in 2023 during a regional training with 19 artists from nine countries, including refugees and host community members, working alongside Ukrainian, Syrian and Afghan refugee children. The creation of the four-story mural was an opportunity to teach skills necessary to cultivate community-based public arts programmes, which each of the artists could then use to facilitate their own programme. © Artolution, UNHCR Bulgaria, UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe, Bulgaria Red Cross.

Objective 3: Expand access to third-country solutions

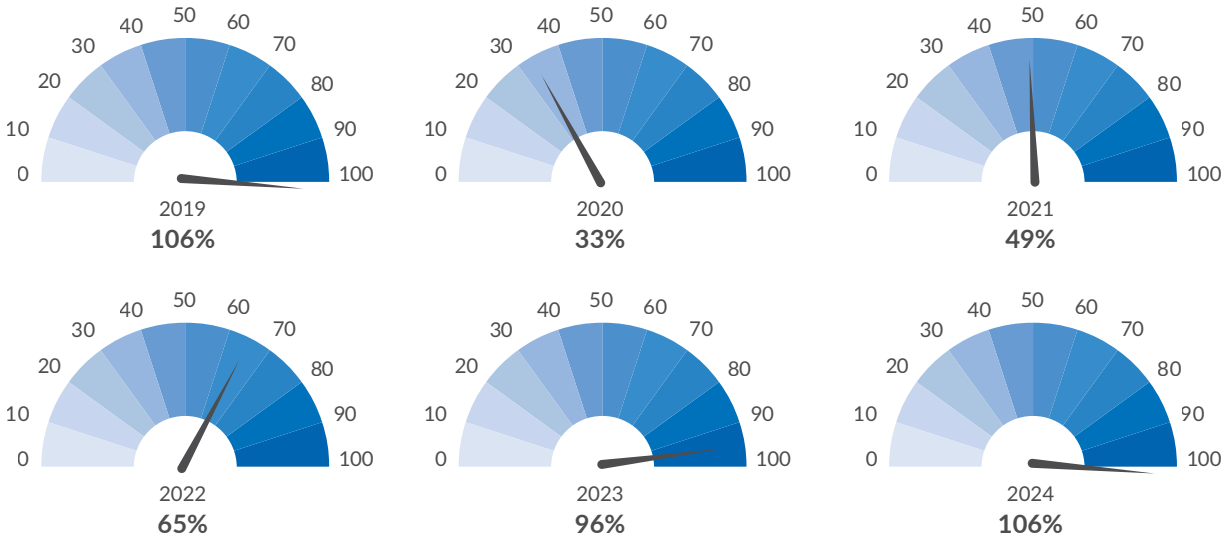
Outcome 3.1: Refugees in need have access to resettlement opportunities in an increasing number of countries

Resettlement surpassed annual target in 2024, before numbers dropped sharply in 2025.

The year 2024 marked a historic milestone in global refugee resettlement. More than 116,000 refugees were resettled by UNHCR (GCR indicator 3.1.1),[45] through the combined efforts of 21 countries (GCR indicator 3.1.2)—surpassing, for the first time, the annual target set under the Third-country Solutions for Refugees: Roadmap 2030 (see Figure 27).

UNHCR played a central role in this achievement, submitting over 203,500 cases to 23 countries, a 31 per cent increase compared to 2023. These submissions, originating from 90 UNHCR country operations, represent the highest number recorded since the 1990s.

Figure 27: Percentage of the target reached in the number of UNHCR-assisted resettlement departures, 2021-2024



For more than 70 years, UNHCR has worked with partners to make resettlement a vital protection tool for refugees facing deportation, violence, medical emergencies, and other critical threats. Resettlement also serves as an act of solidarity with countries of first asylum, especially when integrated into broader regional protection and solutions strategies.

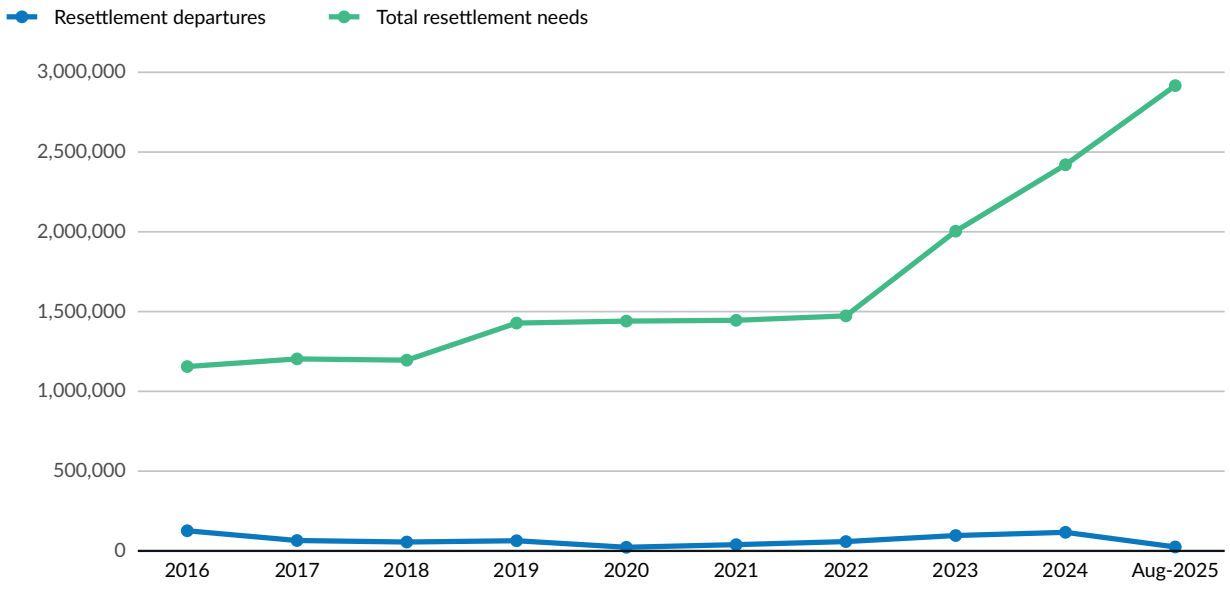
Despite its proven value, resettlement faces significant challenges. UNHCR-assisted departures in 2024 were the highest since 2016, yet commitments for 2025 are set to decline, with fewer than 25,000 departures recorded by August 2025. Quotas are shrinking, and new restrictions, including limits on gender distribution within families, are emerging. While larger quotas are important, smaller and mid-sized countries also play a critical role, particularly when cases are processed quickly and remotely following protection-centred criteria. Every resettlement place counts, and smaller quotas add up. Meeting global needs will require sustained international commitment (see Figure 28).

Persistent conflicts, insecurity, and unresolved root causes of displacement keep millions of people from returning home safely. Many refugees also face barriers to self-reliance and meaningful community contributions in host countries. While recent developments in Syria have opened limited prospects for return, many Syrian refugees still require international protection. Meanwhile, new and protracted crises—including those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan—underscore the continued need for resettlement as a life-saving solution.

UNHCR has referred 29,990 refugees for resettlement in 2025 (January-September), with almost 76 per cent of them being women and children. Of the total submissions by UNHCR, 45 per cent were referred for legal and physical protection needs, 29 per cent were women, children, or adolescents at risk, and 23 per cent were survivors of violence and torture. By 2026, an estimated 2.5 million refugees are expected to require resettlement, yet available places remain far below this need. Refugees from Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, South Sudan, Sudan, and Syria face particularly acute needs.

The resettlement community has set ambitious annual targets under the Roadmap 2030. For 2026, the goal is 120,000 refugees. The Roadmap is achievable, but only with sustained political will and collective action to turn commitments into reality. UNHCR will continue to leverage its expertise and outreach capacity to support States in this endeavour, acting as the global coordinator to identify and submit cases.

Figure 28: Total resettlement needs compared to departures (individuals), 2016 (end-year)-2025 (end-August)



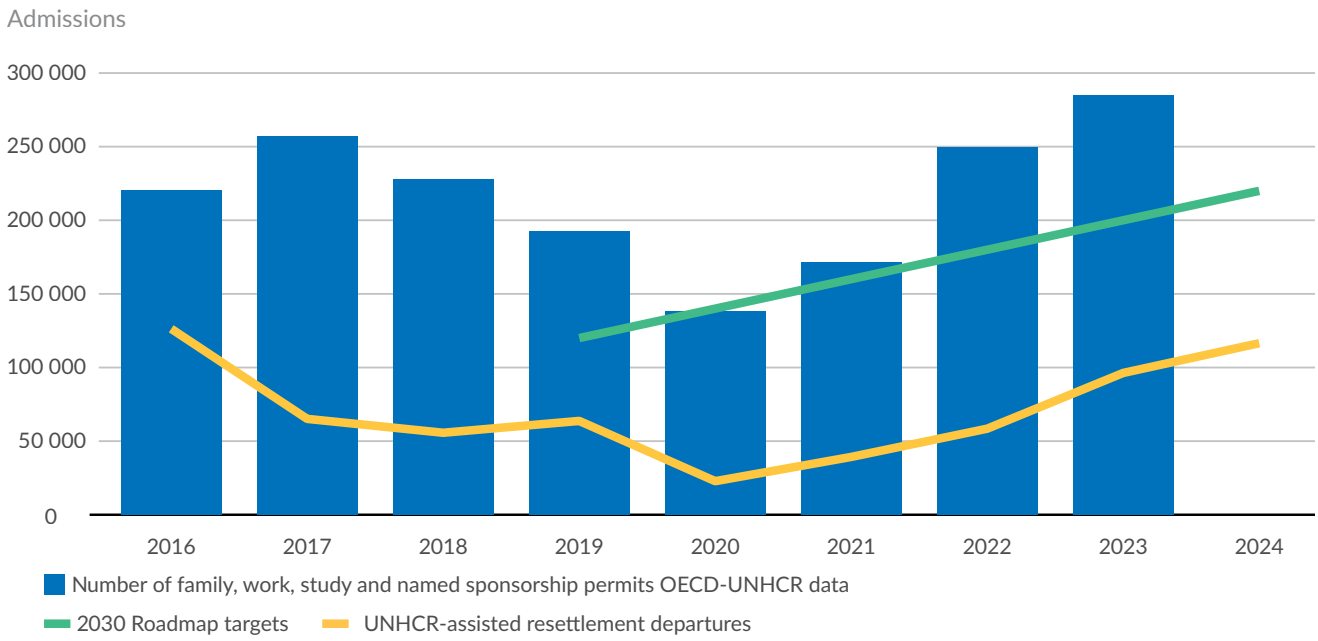
Outcome 3.2 Refugees have access to complementary pathways for admission to third countries

Complementary pathways are regular migration channels with refugee-specific flexibilities, enabling access to work, study, and other opportunities outside the first countries of asylum. They allow refugees to obtain skills-based permits or reunite with family, while taking into account their need for international protection and the constraints of their refugee status. These pathways also include sponsorship programmes and humanitarian admissions tailored to individual needs or relationships. Complementary pathways are not a substitute for UNHCR-assisted resettlement programmes, but a way to broaden access to protection and solutions through multi-actor approaches and inclusion within existing migration frameworks. Expanding and systematizing these opportunities is crucial for enabling and scaling third-country solutions.[46]

Complementary pathways are on the rise, with 38 countries having issued permits to over 1.7 million refugees between 2016 and 2023.

Between 2016 and 2023, over 1.7 million individuals from Afghanistan, Eritrea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela received first-time entry permits to OECD countries and Brazil for study, work, family or named sponsorship reasons (GCR indicator 3.2.1). The number of permits rose from 138,000 in 2020 to 285,000 in 2023, the highest annual total to date, surpassing the previous record of 257,000 in 2017. Although the overall trend is positive, the rate of increase slowed from 45 per cent to 14 per cent between 2022 and 2023, indicating that continued efforts are needed to sustain momentum. Throughout this period, 38 countries offered safe admission and stay options through complementary pathways (GCR indicator 3.2.2; see Figure 29). The OECD and UNHCR's *Safe Pathways for Refugees* report series, launched in 2017, provides data on these pathways up to 2023. While the data is indicative, covering only eight nationalities and limited to OECD countries and Brazil, it represents a critical step towards addressing the longstanding gap in understanding refugee access to complementary pathways.

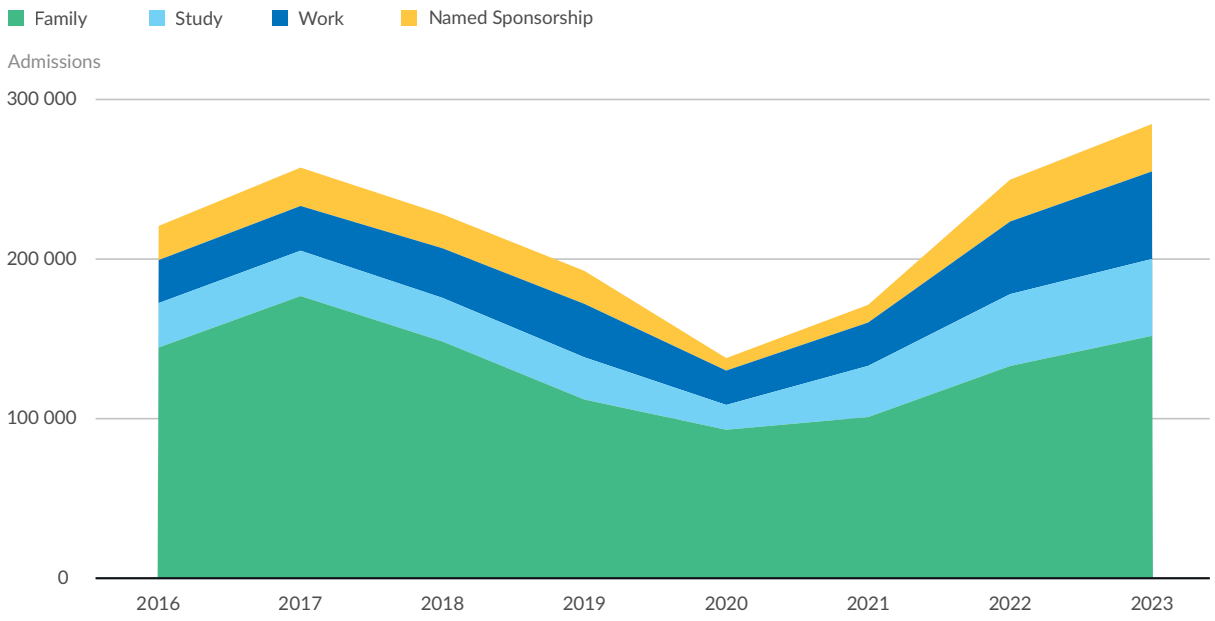
Figure 29: Admissions through complementary pathways and progress against strategy targets (cumulative), 2016-2024



Family permits accounted for majority of regular pathway admissions, labour and study routes accelerated.

Between 2016 and 2023, 61 per cent of permits were issued for family reunification, 15 per cent for labour, 14 per cent for study, and 9 per cent for named sponsorship. Family permits peaked at 176,800 in 2017, dropped to 96,600 in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, and have increased each year since. In 2023, there were 151,900 family permits, the second-highest annual total in this period. Study and work permits have also grown since 2020, reaching record levels in 2022 and 2023. Between 2016 and 2023, study permits rose by 73 per cent to 48,200 in 2023, while work permits expanded even more rapidly, increasing by 107 per cent to 54,900. Named sponsorships grew by 39 per cent to 29,700 in 2023, although only two countries currently offer this option (see Figure 30). Strengthening family reunification can enhance social stability and create a supportive environment for refugees, easing integration. At the same time, labour and study permits help match refugees with opportunities that leverage their skills and potential. Named sponsorship offers another pathway, enabling communities and groups to play an active role in refugee protection.

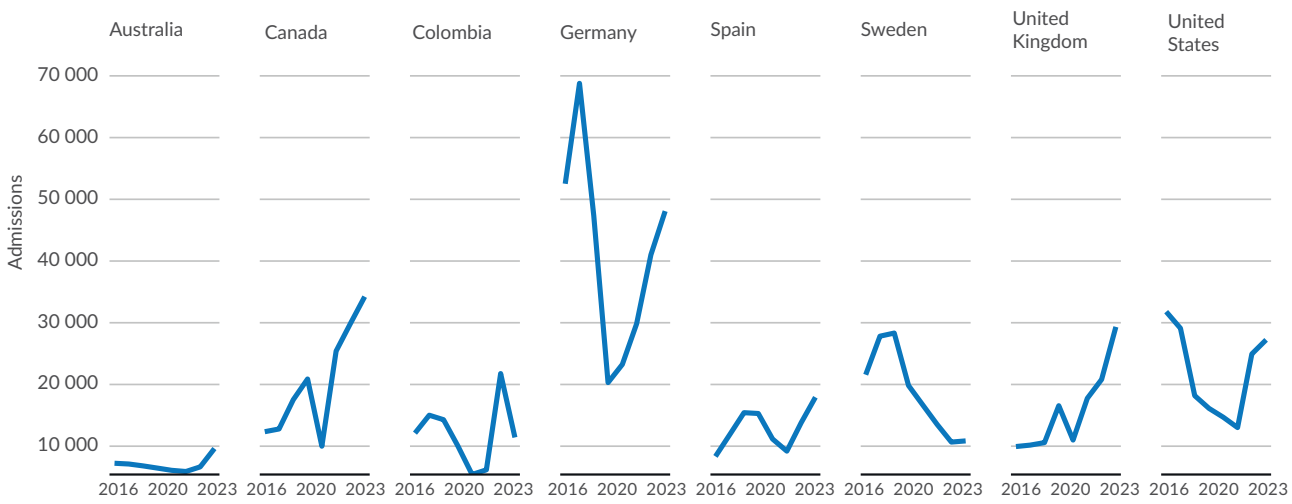
Figure 30: Number of permits issued, by type, 2016-2023



Just four countries issued over half of first-time entry permits from 2016 to 2023.

Between 2016 and 2023, Canada, Germany, Sweden, and the United States issued over half of all first-time permits for work, study, named sponsorship, and family reasons. Germany issued 331,100 permits to the eight nationalities, the majority (286,400 permits) for family reasons. Canada was the second top destination and issued the most permits in 2021, 2022 and 2023. The United States issued approximately 175,100 permits during this period, with growth since 2021. However, its peak was in 2016, at 31,800. Sweden was fourth, but its numbers dropped from 2018 to 2022 and remained stable in 2023. The United Kingdom and Spain set records in 2023, with 29,300 and 17,900 permits. Colombia and Australia also stood out, with Colombia issuing 96,200 first-time entry permits, mostly for work, and Australia granting 94,700 permits during this period (see Figure 31).

Figure 31: Top eight countries (OECD countries and Brazil) issuing family, work, study, and private sponsorship permits to eight nationalities, 2016-2023 (cumulative)



The Rohingya Artolution "Elephant-strument" was crafted entirely from recycled plastic bottles collected during a community clean-up. These bottles were painted and assembled into an interactive, educational, and sustainable musical sculpture built on a bamboo structure with children in the Balukhali Rohingya Refugee Camp in southern Bangladesh. © ARTOLUTION, UNHCR Bangladesh, and Terre des hommes. Photo credit: Mohammed Islam.

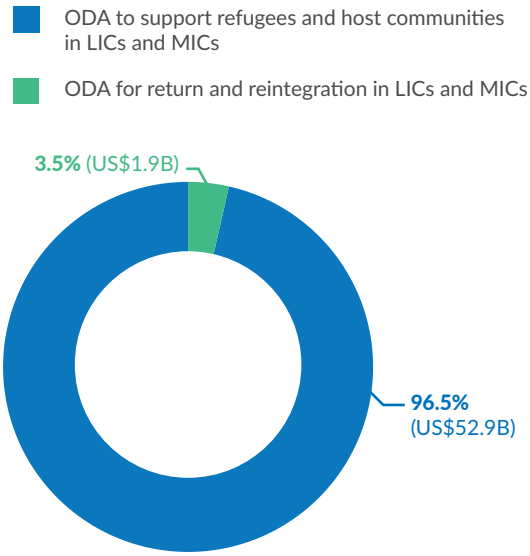
Objective 4: Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity

Outcome 1: Resources are made available to support the sustainable reintegration of returning refugees by an increasing number of donors

The bulk of the ODA went to refugees in hosting countries, with only 3.5 per cent reaching returnees in countries of origin.

Between 2020 and 2023, only 3.5 per cent (USD 1.9 billion) of ODA to refugee situations in LICs and MICs was directed towards projects supporting returnees and their host communities (GCR indicator 4.1.1). In contrast, 96.5 per cent (USD 52.9 billion) was allocated to support refugees and their host communities (see Figure 32). This pattern remained consistent across all four years.

Figure 32: ODA for refugee situations, by type of recipient, 2020-2023, USD disbursements in 2023 constant prices, Billions



While the focus on refugees and host communities likely reflects the urgent needs in countries of asylum, it is concerning that voluntary return, typically the most preferred solution for refugees, when conditions of safety and dignity are met, is not receiving sufficient financial attention and support. Without greater support, the international community risks missing key opportunities to assist host countries, promote peace and recovery in countries of origin, and deliver lasting solutions for displaced individuals. Investing in sustainable reintegration can yield long-term benefits: successful reintegration reduces the dependency on humanitarian aid by promoting self-sufficiency among returnees, which can be more cost-effective than prolonged displacement support.

Funding for returnees increased by 6 per cent in 2023 compared to 2020 but remained far below the level needed to match the sharp rise in returnee numbers.

Despite a 6 per cent increase in ODA for refugee returnees in LICs and MICs—from USD 521 million in 2020 to USD 552 million in 2023—funding has not kept pace with a 349 per cent surge in the number of returnees. This widening gap underscores a critical risk: insufficient reintegration support can exacerbate instability, hinder peacebuilding and recovery, and strain social cohesion and economic stability in countries of origin, triggering new outflows and onward movements. Bridging this gap is urgent for GCR stakeholders to ensure successful reintegration and sustainable development in affected regions.

ODA for returnees remained unevenly distributed.

Some countries with high numbers of returnees received disproportionately low funding to help them reintegrate, while others with far fewer returnees received significantly more. For example, in 2020, South Sudan received nearly half of all refugee returns that year (49 per cent) but received only 2.7 per cent of the ODA for returnees. In contrast, Somalia, with just 0.6 per cent of returnees that year, received 10.8 per cent of funding. A similar pattern emerged in 2023, where South Sudan, with 46.8 per cent of returnees, received just 7.2 per cent. Accurately classifying contributions as benefiting returnees versus refugees remains a challenge for providers. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the data still offer valuable insights—highlighting that funding allocations are not always aligned with actual needs on the ground.

The number of donors stayed constant, but the composition shifted unpredictably.

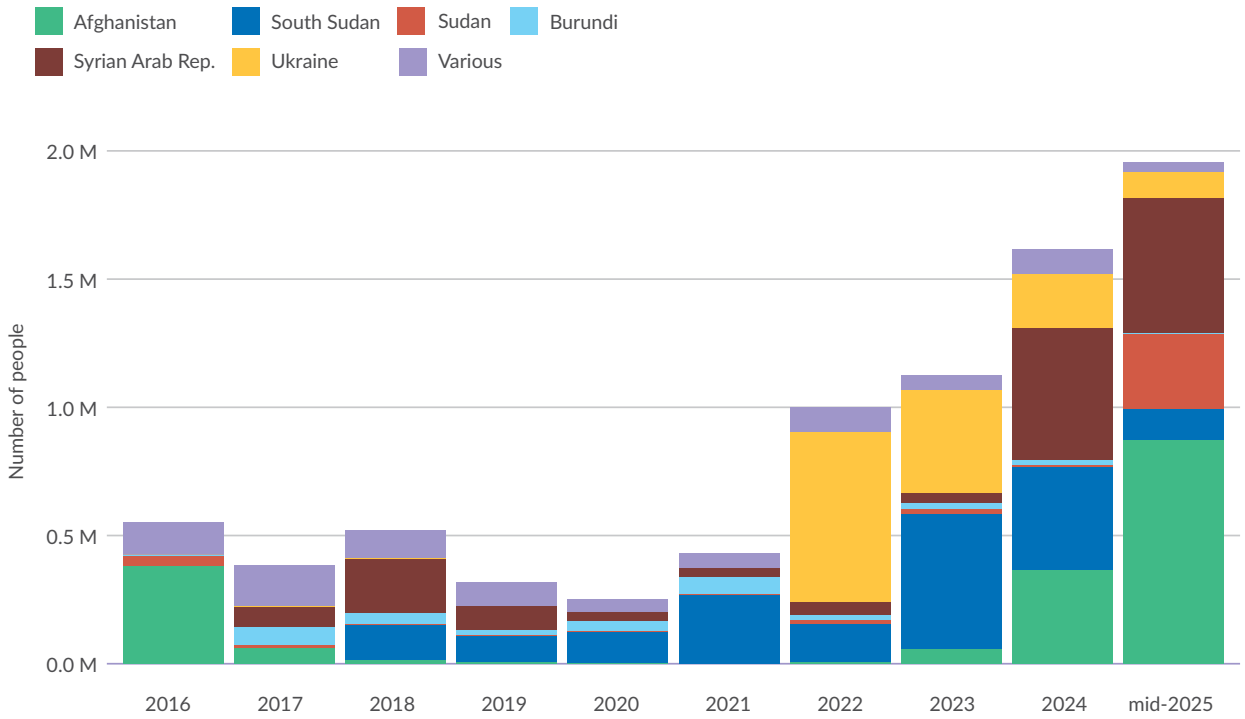
The total number of donors slightly increased from 27 in 2020 to 29 in 2023 (GCR indicator 4.1.2), but the composition shifted unpredictably. Turnover occurred primarily among smaller contributors. Major donors, including Germany, the United States, and European Union Institutions, formed a stable core group that provided over 50 per cent of the total funding. Exits by smaller donors, such as Australia, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, and New Zealand, were offset by the entry of others, including the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, and several European countries. This pattern among the providers that reported their contributions highlights both stability in the largest funding sources and some dynamism in the broader donor base over the period. However, projected cuts in 2025 and beyond may challenge this stability, underscoring the need to diversify the donor base, secure core pledges, and monitor trends to ensure more predictable and equitable support for refugees.

Outcome 2: Refugees are able to return and reintegrate socially and economically

Refugee returns 2016–2025: A decade of shifting realities with 1.6 million going home in 2024.

Between 2016 and 2025, approximately 8.1 million refugees have returned to their countries of origin (GCR indicator 4.2.1). In 2024, 1.6 million people returned, and almost 2 million have done so in the first half of 2025 (see Figure 33). Over the decade, most returns were to Afghanistan, Burundi, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine. The reasons for returning are tied to evolving dynamics in conflict, peace efforts, or changes in the conditions within countries of origin or former countries of asylum. Whether these returns will be durable and lead to a sustainable reintegration in the country of origin depends on various factors such as safety, access to housing and basic services, and the ability to earn a living. Returns that occur prematurely, in the absence of conducive conditions in the country of origin or are induced primarily by factors such as deteriorating conditions in host countries, may not be sustainable and may result in secondary displacement or onward movements.

Figure 33: Number of total returnees in the largest countries of refugee return, 2016-mid-2025



Since the Taliban's takeover in 2021, voluntary returns to Afghanistan have sharply declined due to insecurity, economic collapse, and new restrictions on the rights of women and minorities. Nevertheless, over 870,000 Afghans have returned from neighbouring countries between January and June 2025, and yet, despite increasing needs, funding levels have declined.[47] Whether forced or voluntary, returnees are arriving in a country gripped by a severe humanitarian and human rights crisis. Some are returning after decades away, while others are entering Afghanistan for the first time. Many urgently need food, water, shelter, and healthcare, access to education, and face longer-term challenges such as discrimination, gender and ethnic persecution, limited reintegration opportunities, and insufficient access to jobs.

In South Sudan, more than 1.7 million refugees have returned from neighbouring countries since the signing of the Revitalized Peace Agreement in 2018. The pace of returns surged in 2024–2025, driven by the escalating conflict in Sudan, which forced many to return despite limited services and insecurity in their areas of origin. UNHCR and the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission recorded over 119,000 returns in January to June 2025 alone. The Government launched the Action Plan on Returns, Reintegration, and Recovery (2024–2028) to promote voluntary, safe, and dignified returns through coordinated services, livelihood support, infrastructure development, and reconciliation.

The civil war that began in April 2023 changed Sudan from a country that hosted refugees into one from where many were forced to flee. Since 2024, more than 1.8 million Sudanese, including both internally displaced persons and refugees, have returned, primarily to Khartoum, Sennar, and Al Jazirah. Many organized their own return not because Sudan had become safer, but because conditions in host countries deteriorated. This juxtaposition highlights the involuntary nature of many returns, as worsening conditions in some host countries 'pushed' individuals home, while persistent risks and insecurity in Sudan failed to 'pull' them back voluntarily. Damaged infrastructure and a lack of services remain major challenges.

Since 2017, more than 250,000 refugees have returned to Burundi following the 2015 political crisis. The pace of returns has slowed since its peak in 2021, yet returns continue, reflecting both a degree of stability and ongoing socioeconomic pressures in countries of asylum. The reintegration of returnees remains challenging due to land disputes,

economic hardship, limited employment opportunities, and overstretched public services. A European Union-funded project supports reintegration by strengthening legal and protection services, as well as building local capacities in civil documentation, education, and the recognition of vocational training. However, land disputes and economic hardship continue to be common obstacles. The new influx of refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2025 put further pressure on the fragile system of services and infrastructure, highlighting the importance of continuous development aid and institutional support to the country.

Following the fall of the Assad government in December 2024, more than 1 million Syrian and 1.8 million internally displaced persons returned within nine months. While approximately 80 per cent of Syrian refugees expressed a desire to return one day, those who do often find their homes destroyed, with few services available, and limited opportunities to earn a living. This moment presents a unique opportunity to address one of the world's largest displacement crises. It calls for stronger collaboration among the international community, the private sector, and Syrians in the diaspora to scale up support for recovery efforts and ensure that voluntary returns are well-informed, sustainable and dignified, preventing renewed displacement.[48]

In Ukraine, more than 98,000 refugees returned home during the first half of 2025. This trend underscores the importance of evidence-based approaches in informing sustainable solutions. In response, UNHCR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine launched the Ukraine is Home platform to provide refugees and internally displaced persons with reliable information about voluntary return, services, and recovery opportunities. Central to these efforts is an integrated data framework—built on an innovative modelling approach. This framework combines socio-economic conditions in host countries, the situations in areas of origin, and refugee intentions, providing granular insights into return dynamics across various war outcome scenarios. These insights are grounded in individual refugee profiles and aspirations. Findings suggest that returns are likely to be gradual, influenced by seasonal factors and policy shifts, with urban areas drawing more returnees due to better services. Those more likely to return tend to be single carers or older individuals without young children, and own intact property. Tailored, inclusive solutions must reflect each refugee's unique aspirations, combining robust data with their voices.

Overall, a sustainable return depends on stability, investment in essential services, housing, resolution of legal and property issues, and economic opportunities. Safety and security, housing availability, and access to basic services continue to be significant barriers. UNHCR is facilitating voluntary returns and scaling up support, including shelter rehabilitation, core relief items, livelihoods assistance, civil documentation, protection services and collecting data and evidence[49].

"The Light of Education" mural portrays a young learner embracing the vital role of education during emergencies in the Rohingya refugee crisis. Painted in the Balukhali Rohingya refugee camps in southern Bangladesh, the figure is adorned with traditional folkloric patterns created by children. This artwork serves as a powerful call for universal access to education across the Rohingya camps, emphasizing education as a fundamental right and a pathway to building the community's future. © ARTOLUTION, UNHCR Bangladesh, and Terre des hommes. Photo credit: Mohammad Nur.

CHAPTER 4

Roadmap to the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review

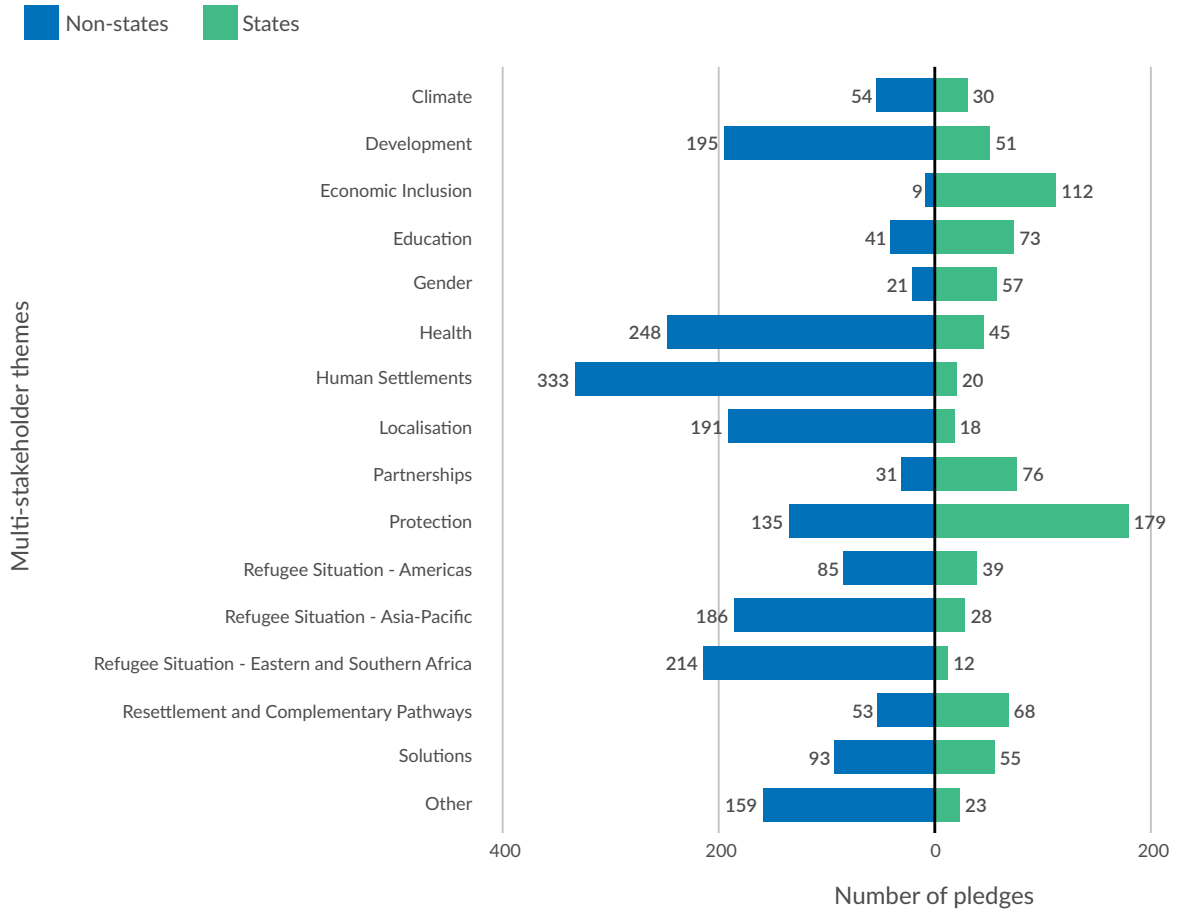
The Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Progress Review—the second high-level officials' meeting—will take place in Geneva in December 2025, co-hosted by UNHCR and Switzerland and co-convened by Colombia, France, Japan, Jordan and Uganda. As a key mechanism under the Global Compact on Refugees, this mid-term review between two GRFs enables governments, stakeholders, and refugees to assess progress, review pledges, and demonstrate impact. It provides an opportunity to showcase good practices, address challenges and identify areas requiring support ahead of the next Forum in 2027. The meeting is expected to gather participants from States, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, academia, faith-based actors and forcibly displaced and stateless people, to reinforce responsibility-sharing and translate commitments into tangible improvements for refugees and host communities. It is also an opportunity to continue developing and refining the GCR process to ensure that it remains fit for purpose amid a shifting landscape.

Turning commitments into impact: progress on multi-stakeholder pledges

Launched at the GRF 2023, the 47 multi-stakeholder pledge framework serves as a key mechanism for translating commitments into tangible results. It focuses on priority areas such as expanding resettlement opportunities, increasing funding, and improving access to education and employment, providing a clear pathway to advance the objectives of the Compact. Through these collective pledges, a diverse range of actors collaborate to share responsibility and deliver sustainable, long-term solutions.

By October 2025, progress has been significant: 93 per cent of pledges made in 2019 and 42 per cent of those from 2023 are either completed or underway. These efforts have led to expanded resettlement options, promoted gender equality and refugee inclusion, improved access to education and livelihoods, and strengthened support for national health systems. Multi-stakeholder pledges have been instrumental in driving these achievements, mobilizing resources and fostering collaboration across sectors. To date, over 3,450 pledges have been recorded across 15 thematic areas, spanning 47 multi-stakeholder pledges and involving more than 1,300 partners (see Figure 34).

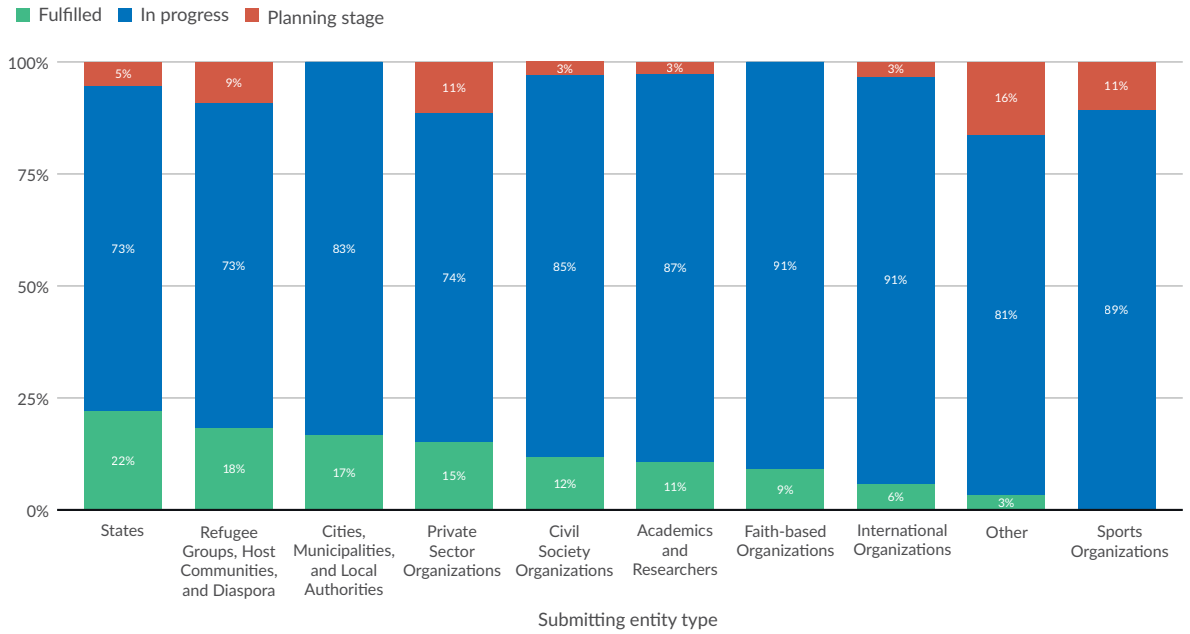
Figure 34: Number of pledges, by multi-stakeholder themes and type of stakeholder, 2025 (end-October)



By October 2025, 18 per cent of pledges were fully implemented, 40 per cent were underway, and 3 per cent were in the planning phase. More than half of all pledges—1,891 in total—came from multi-stakeholder pledges, primarily involving States, civil society, and international organizations, with over 68 per cent focused on shared commitments (see Figure 35).

Pledges now span a broader range of regions, with increased commitments from Europe, the Americas, and Africa, including countries hosting large refugee populations. Since 2023, more than 2,000 pledge updates have been submitted, demonstrating strong engagement and accountability among stakeholders.

Figure 35: Multi-stakeholder pledges implementation, by type of pledging entities, 2025 (end-October)



Support platforms driving collective action

Support Platforms remain a central mechanism under the Global Compact on Refugees, strengthening regional and national responses, mobilizing political commitment, and sustaining advocacy, financing, and technical cooperation. The Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) Support Platform continues to advance long-term solutions through initiatives such as the ReSolve Multi-stakeholder Pledge, the renewal of Local Core Groups in Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pakistan, as well as ongoing political dialogue—although large-scale returns highlight the need for stronger international engagement.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Support Platform is consolidating approaches across the Eastern and Horn of Africa region, fostering cross-border solutions, inclusive service delivery, and economic participation of refugees. It also supports member states through technical assistance and policy harmonization. The 2024 launch of the IGAD Policy Framework on Refugee Protection and the creation of the IGAD Refugee Engagement Forum have formalized refugee-led networks, ensuring refugee voices inform policy and programme design.

In the Central African Republic, the CAR Solutions Support Platform has prioritized voluntary returns, the adoption of a 2025 Action Plan, and innovative partnerships. These include a high-level Forum on Forced Displacement and the Private Sector, aimed at catalysing investment in jobs, training, financial inclusion, and infrastructure. Development partners and a forthcoming agreement with the African Development Bank are supporting these efforts.

Meanwhile, the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS, for its Spanish

acronym) and its Support Platform, under the Pro-Tempore Presidency of Costa Rica and the leadership of Colombia, respectively, are advancing regional responses to forced displacement through ambitious national reforms and coordinated initiatives. These include Costa Rica's asylum system reform and certification of labour competencies, El Salvador's "My First Job" program for youth employment and inclusion, Honduras' leadership in regional displacement statistics, and Guatemala's expansion of Cities of Solidarity, among other best practices. With strong financial and political backing from States, international institutions, and civil society, MIRPS continues to translate pledges into tangible impact—fostering whole-of-society engagement, protection and durable solutions across the region.

Sustainable Responses approach

The GRF Progress Review will also be a moment to reflect on how the Sustainable Responses approach can contribute to advancing towards the four objectives of the Compact. This approach aims to develop nationally led strategies that link humanitarian and development initiatives, with the goal of implementing pledges made under the Global Compact on Refugees towards long-term solutions. A key focus of this approach is to shift from creating parallel humanitarian structures to building inclusive national systems, empowering refugees and host communities to become more self-reliant as a key step towards durable solutions. The approach is based on a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach that leverages and builds on the GCR's policy process and pledge framework, as well as its commitment to ensuring refugees are included in development policies and actions.

"The Whale of Hospitality" mural was created with Syrian refugee youth and Jordanian host community youth in Zarqa, Jordan. Inside the whale, Arabic poetry expresses the children's dreams for the future, while traditional Arabic calligraphy flows across its body. At the top, a city of peace rises, with water spouting upward—a symbol of the aspiration for a welcoming and harmonious city. © ARTOLUTION, German Development Agency (GIZ). Photo and mural credit: Dr. Max Frieder, Ed.D.

CHAPTER 5

Advancing refugee data inclusion

Considerable progress has been made in the availability of internationally comparable data for the 16 GCR indicators. The number of data records increased from 408 in 2021 to 901 in 2025, reflecting a growing commitment to robust, evidence-based policymaking. To further improve access, UNHCR is working to make country-level GCR indicator data available through the updated Refugee Data Finder, which is scheduled to be launched in 2026. This new data finder will provide open access to robust socioeconomic statistics, alongside official population statistics on forcibly displaced and stateless people, in a manner accessible to a broad range of users who need it for analysis, research, operational decisions, policy, advocacy, and more. It will be one of the key outputs of statistical inclusion, showcasing key indicators compiled from surveys undertaken by humanitarian and development partners, as well as national surveys and censuses that included forcibly displaced and stateless populations.

Enhanced data availability and accessibility enable more accurate monitoring of progress against the Compact's objectives, supporting both accountability and informed decision-making. The expansion of internationally comparable records facilitates the identification of gaps and good practices, ensuring that interventions are better targeted and resources are allocated where they are most needed. By highlighting successes and exposing gaps, these records guide collaborative, data-driven action to improve outcomes for refugees worldwide. Pledges made at the GRF have supported this progress. For example, the OECD pledged to collect reliable annual data on ODA for refugee situations through the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) development finance reporting process and is working to expand the evidence base for complementary pathways. The Multi-stakeholder Pledge on statistical inclusion, comprising more than 100 financial, technical, material, and policy support commitments, aims to advance statistical inclusion by systematically including these groups in population and housing censuses, administrative registers, or nationwide household surveys.

Despite ongoing efforts to strengthen evidence under the GCR, data availability remains a significant constraint for several indicators. Notably, the indicator on the proportion of returnees with legally recognized documentation and credentials lacks sufficient data, primarily due to its reliance on UNHCR-led surveys, for example, the Forced Displacement Survey (FDS)[50]—an area heavily impacted by the current funding shortfall. Consequently, this indicator has been excluded from the present reporting cycle. Other key indicators related to inclusion, such as poverty, access to work, mobility, and education, also face considerable data gaps. These limitations underscore the urgent need to enhance data collection and reporting mechanisms, particularly through the strengthening of national statistical systems.

Statistical inclusion is making good strides, advanced through multi-stakeholder pledges.

The Compact has driven significant progress in the statistical inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons within national data systems. Since the establishment of the Expert Group on Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS) in 2016, over 46 countries have adopted international recommendations to include refugees in national censuses, household surveys, and administrative registers.[51] This transformation, supported by technical and financial assistance from the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC),[52] has enabled countries to generate reliable, comparable data on refugee populations. Such data is essential for evidence-based policymaking, ensuring refugees' visibility in national development plans, and advancing the 2030 Agenda's commitment to leave no one behind.

With the Multi-stakeholder Pledge on statistical inclusion, co-led by EGRISS, the JDC, and the Republic of Djibouti's Bureau for National Statistics, momentum for refugee data inclusion continues to grow. An increasing number of countries, including Iraq, Djibouti, Moldova, Kenya, Peru, Bangladesh, Malawi, and Uganda, have integrated refugees into national surveys and censuses. These efforts have generated critical insights into the needs and living conditions of refugees and host communities, directly informing policy reforms and resource allocation.

Improving the monitoring of Statistical Inclusion

To strengthen monitoring of statistical inclusion, UNHCR is developing a standardized measurement framework based on established models such as the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the World Bank's Statistical Performance Index (SPI), the Statistical Capacity Monitor by Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (Paris21), statistical capacity development by the UN Statistics Division (UNSD), and Open Data Inventory (ODIN). This framework provides a standard structure for national statistical systems to design, assess, and improve their processes across six key dimensions: **1) Governance and Standards, 2) Data Financing, 3) Data Production, 4) Data Dissemination, 5) Data Use, and 6) Meaningful Participation.** It aims to promote interoperability, foster international collaboration, and support the development of agile, inclusive statistical systems that generate accurate, disaggregated data to improve outcomes for forcibly displaced and stateless persons.

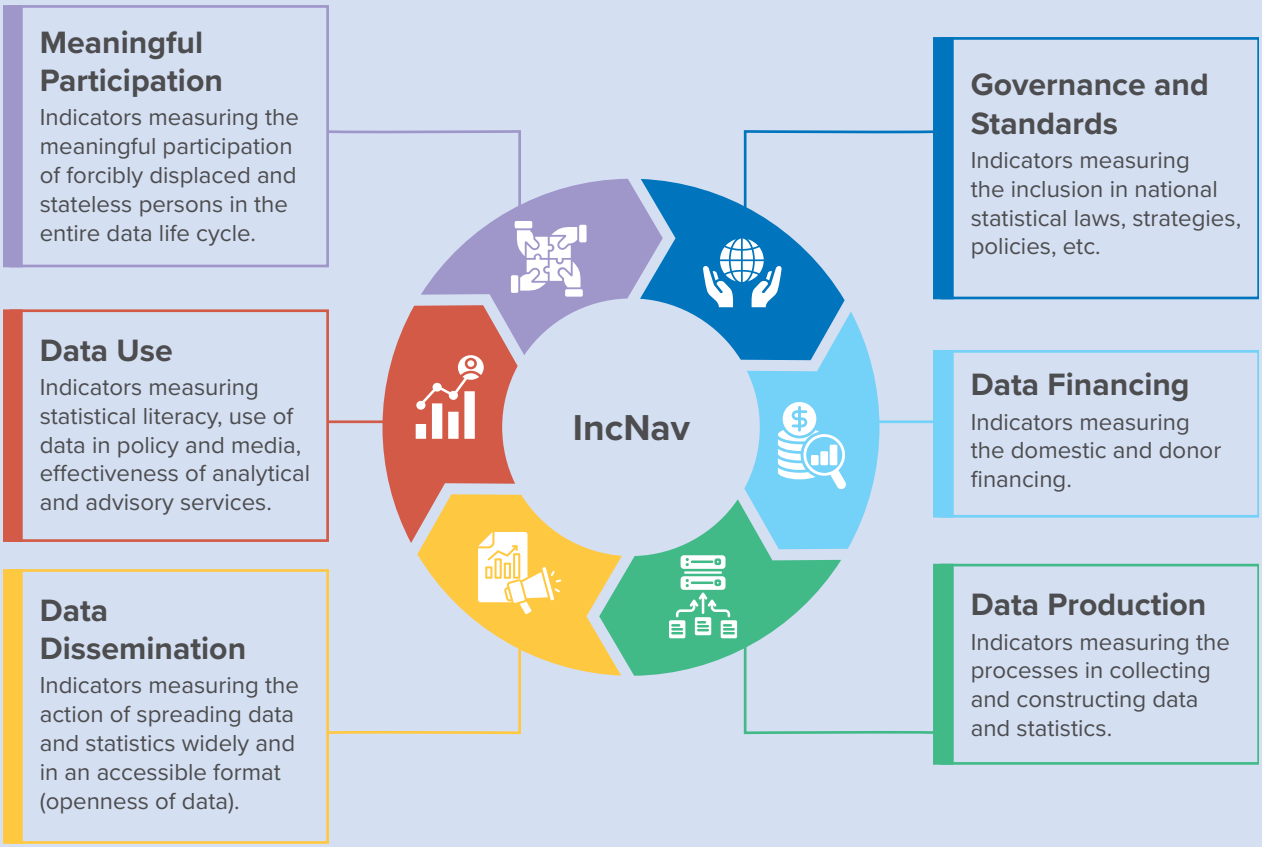
Progress under each dimension will be tracked through UNHCR's **Statistical Inclusion Navigator (IncNav)**—a public platform designed for governments, national authorities, national statistical offices, civil society, donors, humanitarian and development actors, academia, media, and United Nations agencies. IncNav will empower countries to monitor and advance the inclusion of displaced and stateless people in national data systems.

Once fully operational, IncNav will enable users to:

- **Snapshot national statistical inclusion** through a non-ranking index, classifying countries into four categories: very high, high, low, and very low.
- **Identify capacity needs** across governance, financing, production, dissemination, use, and participation.
- **Assess strengths and gaps** in national statistical systems.
- **Facilitate collaboration** within and across countries, including technical and financial cooperation.
- **Visualize progress** through open data dashboards and country-level graphics.

Similar platforms like SPI, the Statistical Capacity Monitor, and ODIN have shown that transparent monitoring can incentivize countries to strengthen their statistical systems.

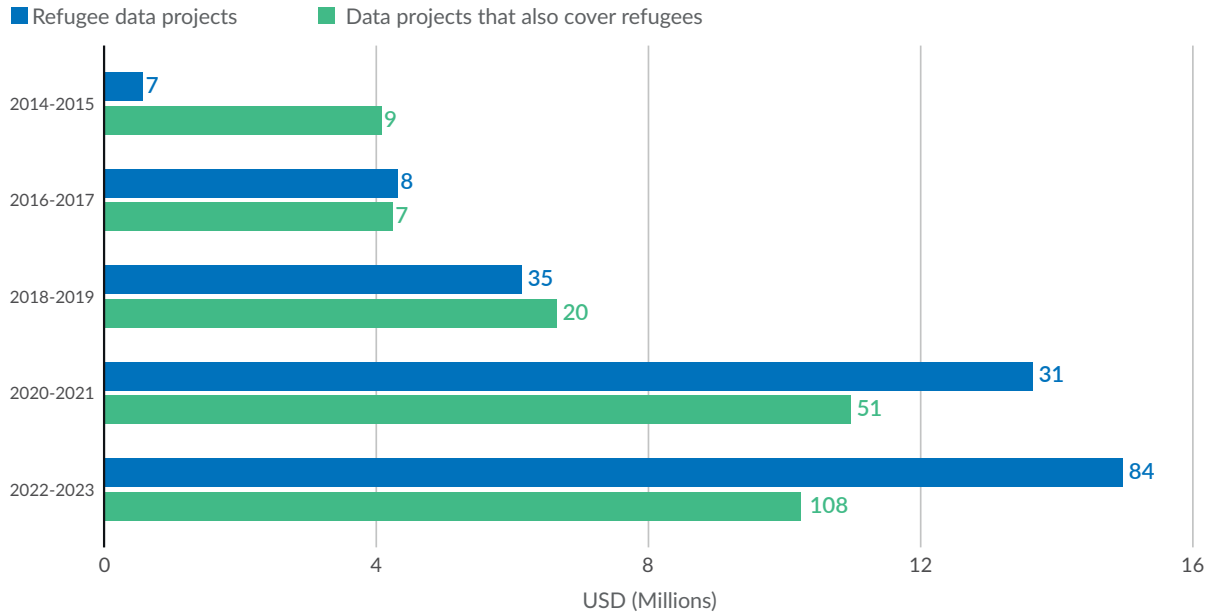
Statistical Inclusion Navigator



Progress in data availability for GCR indicators is fragile due to the growing threat of funding cuts.

International funding for refugee data has grown substantially—from around USD 7 million in 2014–2015 to USD 84 million for refugee-specific projects and USD 108 million for broader data initiatives that also include refugees in 2022-2023. While this reflects an increased recognition of the need for timely, robust data to inform policies (see Figure 36), investments remain modest relative to overall data financing, and risks of stagnation are rising as broader ODA is projected to decline after 2023.[53]

Figure 36: Total funding for refugee data, USD Millions, 2014-2023



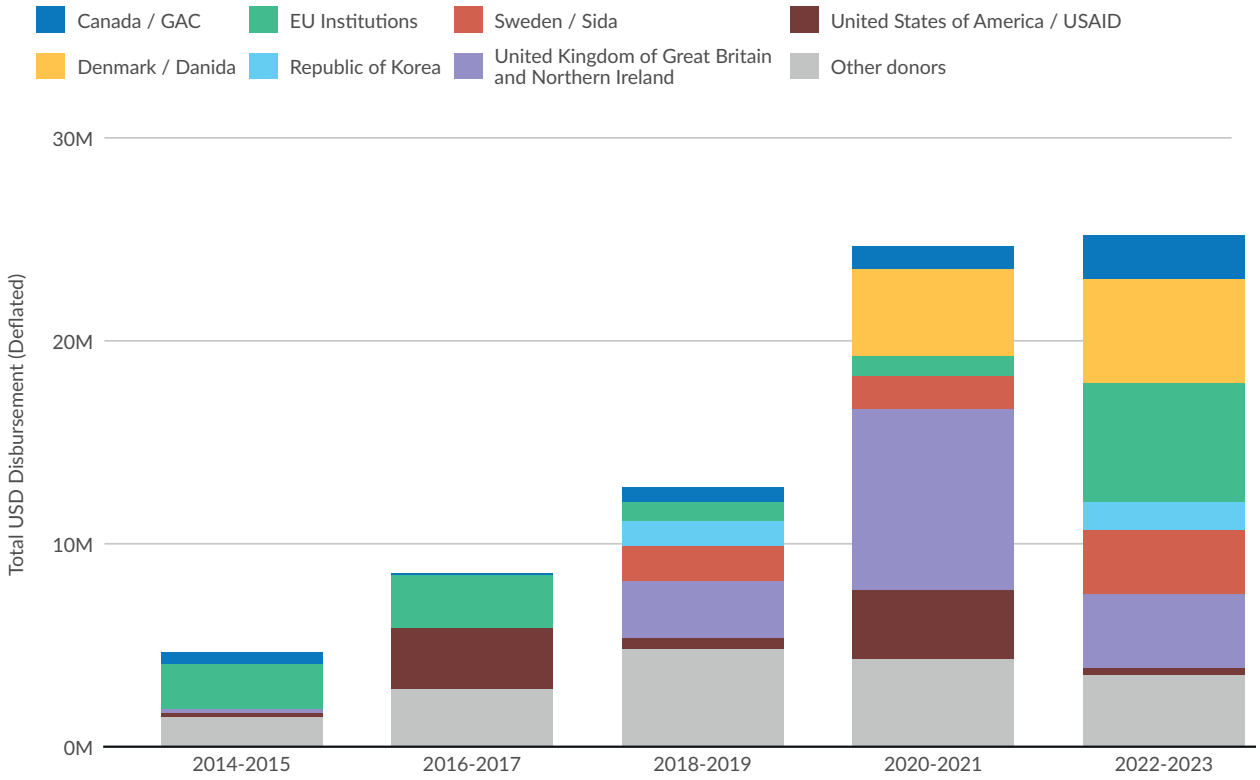
Source: Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data, PARIS21. See: https://smartdatafinance.org. Data retrieved in July 2025. Numbers represented in this chart are in USD millions (2023 prices)

Note: The refugee data projects presented in this figure are filtered from a dataset of projects for data and statistics using policymakers and policy codes reported by donors. Due to reporting granularity, funding for data activity in some projects for refugees may not be identified in this.

The donor landscape has also shifted, with the European Union institutions and Denmark emerging as leading contributors. In contrast, traditional donors such as the United Kingdom and the United States have scaled back their contributions. Canada, Sweden, and the Republic of Korea have stepped up, but the retreat of long-standing donors raises concerns for the sustainability of refugee data efforts (see Figure 37).

To maintain momentum, stable and predictable funding is crucial for empowering host countries and partners to make informed, evidence-based decisions. Collective efforts have shown that inclusive data systems are achievable and impactful—but require sustained investment and international cooperation to thrive.

Figure 37: Total funding for refugee data, by donor, USD Millions, 2014-2023



Note on data sources and methodology

Objective 1: Ease pressures on host countries

Indicator 1.1.1: Volume of official development assistance (ODA) for the benefit of refugees and host communities in the refugee-hosting ODA recipient country

Indicator 1.1.2: Number of donors providing ODA for the benefit of refugees and host communities in the refugee-hosting ODA recipient country

Indicator 1.2.1: Proportion of ODA for the benefit of refugees and host communities channelled to national actors in the refugee-hosting ODA recipient country

Data Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS). The CRS systematically records Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Other Official Flows (OOFs) reported by members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and by multilateral institutions, including United Nations entities, which report on the use of unearmarked or core funding. A small number of non-DAC providers also report voluntarily. The decision to track ODA for refugee situations in the CRS reflects the OECD's commitment to regularly provide data for the GCR framework.

Data Coverage and Methodology: The data cover development financing to OECD's low- and middle-income countries as provided by 74 respondents, including 47 bilateral donors (33 DAC donors and 14 non-DAC donors) and eight multilateral development banks. It also covered the use of core funding by 17 United Nations agency partners and two other international organizations.

Following discussions on various methodological options, a methodology was agreed upon by the DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics (WP-STAT) in October 2022. This methodology requires reporters to identify components of their programmes that support refugees and forcibly displaced populations using three keywords: Refugees and Host Communities, Voluntary Return and Reintegration, and IDPs and Host Communities. However, only financing flows tagged with the first two keywords are covered in the GCR indicator framework. The first keyword, Refugees and Host Communities, covers activities supporting refugees, asylum-seekers, and/or stateless persons in recipient countries, including programmes that promote their inclusion in socioeconomic development or access to social services, or that provide durable solutions in the country of asylum (e.g., local integration, voluntary return support). Financing tagged with this keyword contributes to GCR indicators 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.2.1. The second keyword, Voluntary Return and Reintegration, encompasses activities that support voluntary refugee repatriation and reintegration in the country of origin, including programmes that promote inclusion in socioeconomic development or access to social services for returnees and host communities in the country of origin. Financing tagged with this keyword contributes to GCR indicators 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. Data collected using this methodology and currently available cover the years 2020 – 2023. Data for 2024 will be available in December 2025. For subsequent years, data on ODA for refugee situations is expected to be released approximately 18 months after the activities have taken place. This timeline reflects the standard ODA data processing cycle: the OECD first compiles and publishes complete and detailed general ODA data approximately one year after the end of the reporting year. Data specifically tagged for refugee situations are then processed and published about six months later. In March 2023, the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) adopted the same keyword methodology to track development finance support for forced displacement in recipient countries. These include all LICs and MICs, as well as Least Developed Countries (LDCs), as defined by the United Nations. In addition to the flows reported in the OECD CRS, TOSSD also captures South–South and triangular cooperation, contributions from additional multilateral actors, and mobilised private finance.

Indicator 1.2.2: Number of partners in refugee response plans supporting the refugee-hosting country

Data Source: Data compiled by UNHCR from multi-stakeholder (Inter-agency) Refugee Response Plans (RRPs) 2012-2025.

Data Coverage and Methodology: Averages were compiled by calculating the unique number of partners/actors per year, the RRP, and the geographic

area covered by each partner/actor. The geographic area covered by the partner may be at the country or regional/sub-regional level. This ensures an accurate trend in the number of partners involved in RRPs across the years, as well as a comparison between the types of partners across RRPs.

Objective 2: Enhance refugee self-reliance

Indicator 2.1.1: Proportion of refugees who have access to decent work by law

Data Source: UNHCR's Global Results Framework, COMPASS, and UNHCR's 2025 Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Global Survey.

Data Coverage and Methodology: The data analysis on legal access to work includes legal analyses conducted by UNHCR experts for 96 countries where data were available, covering the period from 2022 to June 2025. These analyses correspond to refugee populations of approximately 31.6 million in 2022, 34.1 million in 2023, 33.3 million in 2024, and 32.8 million as of June 2025. The data on access to formal employment is based on UNHCR expert assessments for the same 96 countries, available for the years 2023 and up to June 2025. These assessments cover 34.1 million refugees in 2023 and 32.8 million as of June 2025.

Indicator 2.1.2: Proportion of refugees who are allowed by law to move freely within the host country

Data Source: UNHCR's Global Results Framework, COMPASS

Data Coverage and Methodology: The data analysis includes legal analyses conducted by UNHCR experts for 96 common countries, covering the period from 2022 to 2024. These analyses correspond to refugee populations of approximately 31.6 million in 2022, 34.1 million in 2023 and 33.3 million in 2024.

Indicator 2.2.1: Proportion of refugee children enrolled in the national education system (primary and secondary)

Data Source: UNHCR's Global Results Framework, COMPASS, and UNHCR annual education data reporting, which includes data compiled by UNHCR operations from national reports, administrative records and/or other authoritative sources.

Data Coverage and Methodology: The data on the national education policy environment includes legal analyses of national education policies conducted by UNHCR experts for 71 countries. The data on gross enrolment covers 55 countries / 5.5 million school-aged children in 2022 and 48 countries / 6.2 million school-aged children in 2024. Data on gross enrolment in 2022, used for the 2023 GCR indicator report, was updated to include additional data sources that were not available at the time of the report. Global aggregates used for time series comparisons between 2022 and 2024 only include countries where data were available in 2022, of which 7 out of the 55 countries did not have data available for 2024.

Indicator 2.2.2: Proportion of refugee and host community populations living below the national poverty line of the host country

Data Sources: Cameroon: National Institute of Statistics and UNHCR. (2025). Forced Displacement Survey-Consumption Module (FDS-CM); Chad: National Institute of Statistics, Economics, and Demographic Studies and World Bank. (2022). Economie et le Secteur Informel et Travail (ECOSIT 5); Chile: Ministry of Social Development and Family. (2022). Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN); Colombia: National Administrative Department of Statistics. (2023). Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares (GEIH); Costa Rica: National Institute of Statistics and Censuses. (2022). La Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHO); Ethiopia: Ethiopian Statistical Service (ESS), World Bank, Ethiopian Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) and UNHCR. (2023). Socio-Economic Survey of Refugees in Ethiopia (SESRE); Jordan: UNHCR. (2023) Vulnerability Assessment Framework Population Survey (VAF). Lebanon: World Bank. (2022). Lebanon Household Survey (LHS). Niger: National Institute of Statistics and World Bank (2018). Enquête Harmonisée sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages (EHCVM). Uganda Bureau of Statistics and World Bank. (2018). Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey.

Data coverage: Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Niger, and Uganda. For Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Niger, and Uganda, the survey population includes refugees and hosts. For Chile and Colombia, the survey population coverage includes Venezuelan

refugees and migrants, as well as the general national population. For Costa Rica, the coverage is limited to Nicaraguan refugees and migrants, along with the general national population. For Jordan, the survey population coverage is refugees only.

Objective 3: Expand access to third-country solutions

Indicator 3.1.1: Number of refugees who departed on resettlement from the host country

Indicator 3.1.2: Number of countries receiving UNHCR resettlement submissions from the host country

Data Source: UNHCR's Administrative Records, Refugee Data Finder.

Data Coverage and Methodology: Data are available for the countries of origin, asylum, and resettlement from 2003 to 2025. Departure figures reported by UNHCR may not match resettlement statistics published by States, as Government figures may include submissions received outside of UNHCR resettlement processes.

Indicator 3.2.1: Number of refugees admitted through complementary pathways from the host country

Indicator 3.2.2: Number of countries offering safe admission and stay options through complementary pathways to refugees hosted in other countries

Data Source: OECD and UNHCR's Administrative Records.

Data Coverage and Methodology: Data on complementary pathways remains limited, and the UNHCR-OECD report remains the most comprehensive source. The data covers only eight key refugee nationalities (Afghanistan, Eritrea, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and Venezuela) and offers insights into the numbers of first-time entry permits for education, labour, and family purposes. The data covers a total of 38 destination countries, including 37 OECD Member States (all except Türkiye) and Brazil, whose authorities volunteered to participate in the data collection. Data is available for 2016-2023. However, the available data provides a sufficient picture of the progress made in enhancing access to complementary pathways for refugees.

Objective 4: Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity

Indicator 4.1.1: Volume of ODA for the benefit of refugee returnees in the ODA recipient country of origin

Indicator 4.1.2: Number of donors providing ODA for the benefit of refugee returnees in the ODA recipient country of origin

Data Source: See data source for Indicators 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.2.1 above.

Data Coverage and Methodology: The data cover development financing to OECD's low- and middle-income countries as provided by 74 survey respondents, including 47 bilateral donors (33 DAC donors and 14 non-DAC donors) and eight multilateral development banks. It also covered the use of core funding by 17 United Nations agency partners and two other international organizations.

See methodology for Indicators 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.2.1 above.

Indicator 4.2.1: Number of refugees returning to their country of origin

Indicator 4.2.2: Proportion of returnees with legally recognized documentation and credentials

Data Source: UNHCR's Administrative Records, return monitoring and household surveys.

Data Coverage and Methodology: Due to limited data availability, no data analysis on this indicator is included in this report.

Endnotes

1 United Nations Secretary-General. "Secretary-General's Address to the Opening of the General Debate of the 80th Session of the General Assembly." United Nations, 23 September 2025.

2 The use of the Gini coefficient as a measure of the overall burden- and responsibility-sharing was first introduced in the GCR Indicator Report 2021 and was further refined in the subsequent report. For more information, see UNHCR (2023). Global Compact on Refugees: Indicator Report 2023, pages 61-63.

3 Includes refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection. This excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate, which reached 5.9 million by the end of 2024. All further references to refugees in this report include all three of these population groups unless otherwise stated.

4 ODA is flows to countries and territories on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of ODA recipients and to multilateral development institutions that are: (i) provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and (ii) concessional (i.e., grants and soft loans) and administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective. For the purpose of tracking concessional development finance for refugee situations from the recipient perspective, the use of the term ODA in this report refers to "ODA and concessional outflows from multilateral organizations." OOF include: grants to developing countries for representational or essentially commercial purposes; official bilateral transactions intended to promote development, but having a grant element of less than 25 per cent; and, official bilateral transactions, whatever their grant element, that are primarily export-facilitating in purpose (see definition of ODA and OOF on the OECD website).

5 In-donor refugee costs refer to the expenses incurred by donor countries for the first 12 months of support to refugees or asylum-seekers within their borders. Under OECD DAC rules, these costs are counted as ODA to reflect the financial effort of hosting refugees and to promote responsibility-sharing with LICs and MICs, which continue to host the vast majority of the world's refugees.

6 United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2025), The Security We Need: The True Cost of Peace – Rebalancing Military Spending to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, page 7.

7 For more information on the changes and trends in forced displacement during the first six months of 2025, see UNHCR (2025). Mid-year Trends 2025.

8 All further references to refugees in this chapter include all three of these population groups unless otherwise stated.

9 World Population estimates (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs).

10 The figure for refugees includes people in refugee-like situations. It excludes other people in need of international protection and Palestinian refugees under UNRWA's mandate. Estimates are based on UNHCR's nowcasting of refugee and asylum-seeker statistics.

11 See The situation of vulnerable refugees from Ukraine, UNHCR.

12 See the World Bank's data on aggregated Gross Domestic Products.

13 The underlying classification of countries into low-, middle- and high-income groups is based on the World Bank's income groups, which are updated annually. The income levels of countries are determined by calculating the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita.

14 The route-based approach proposes a set of comprehensive, targeted and coordinated interventions to reduce dangerous journeys and related human suffering and offer effective, rights-based alternatives to externalization proposals and expulsion practices, while helping States to manage the challenges around irregular movements, including return, in line with their international obligations. For more information, see Explainer on the Route-Based Approach.

15 UNHCR (2025), On the Brink: The devastating toll of aid cuts on people forced to flee.

16 UN OCHA (2025). Hyper-prioritized Global Humanitarian Overview 2025: The cruel math of aid cuts. Humanitarian Action.

17 OHCHR, UNDP and UNODC (2025), Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16: Indicators on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, pages 126-130. The conflict-related deaths data used in this analysis is based on SDG 16.1.2, which documents deaths verified by the United Nations, each with a name, place and location of death. However, these figures may underestimate the true number of deaths.

18 This analysis employed a log-log regression using data on conflict (SDG 16.1.2), strong institutions (SDG 16.a.1), accounting for the size of the population, the gross domestic product per capita, food insecurity, civil liberty, and political rights as covariates. Additionally, the analysis also accounts for the year and the country as fixed effects. The analysis covers 15 conflicts in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, and Yemen from 2015 to 2024. For some countries, data on conflict-related deaths were not available for the entire period. There is a positive association between the indicator on conflict-related deaths and the number of newly displaced individuals (R-squared: 0.86; estimated coefficient: 0.44; p-value < 2.2e-16). Corresponding flow data (new asylum-seekers, refugees and people in refugee-like situation) for these countries were used, when conflict-related deaths were available, from UNHCR's Forced Displacement flow dataset. This analysis does not include the State of Palestine due to a lack of data availability for many of the variables used in the regression model. It also does not capture other countries with high numbers of new displaced individuals, such as Sudan and Colombia.

19 OECD (2025), States of Fragility 2025, OECD Publishing, Paris.

20 GNI is defined as gross domestic product, plus net receipts from abroad of compensation of employees, property income, and net taxes less subsidies on production. Data from the World Bank data portal were used.

21 For the purpose of tracking concessional development finance for refugee situations from the recipient perspective, the use of the term ODA in this report refers to "ODA and concessional outflows from multilateral organisations". For more information, see Boral-Rolland E., Hurwitz A., (2025), "Development Finance for Refugee Situations: Volumes and trends, 2022-2023", OECD Development Perspectives, No. 46, UNCHR, Geneva/OECD Publishing, Paris.

22 United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2025), The Security We Need: The True Cost of Peace – Rebalancing Military Spending to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

23 Non-concessional other official financial flows (OOF) for refugee situations in low- and middle-income countries (see definition of ODA and OOF on the OECD website).

24 OECD (2025). Preliminary official development assistance levels in 2024 (DCD(2025)6). OECD (2025), "Cuts in official development assistance: OECD projections for 2025 and the near term", OECD Policy Briefs, No. 26, OECD Publishing, Paris.

25 See footnote 23.

26 To ensure consistency throughout the report, the underlying classification of countries into income groups is based on the World Bank's income groups.

27 The emergency response sector encompasses activities aimed at meeting the immediate needs of crisis-affected populations in low- and middle-income countries. This includes material relief (shelter, water, sanitation, non-food items, and cash/vouchers), basic healthcare and medical nutrition, education, and emergency food assistance. It also covers coordination and support services to ensure effective delivery of aid and to protect the safety, well-being, dignity, and integrity of affected populations. Activities designed to protect persons or property through force are excluded. Several sectors in the OECD DAC Sector list have been combined in the "Other" category for simplicity, rather than being shown individually. For a full definition of the sectors presented in the chart, refer to the OECD DAC and CRS code list.

28 UNHCR (2025), On the Brink: The devastating toll of aid cuts on people forced to flee.

29 OECD DAC (2017), "Clarifications to the Statistical Reporting Directives on In-Donor Refugee Costs", DCD/DAC(2017)35/FINAL.

30 This is preliminary data for in-donor refugee costs for DAC members only and in 2024 current prices. OECD (2025). Preliminary official development assistance levels in 2024 (DCD(2025)6).

31 For a detailed explanation of the methodology used to estimate the global costs of including refugees in national education and health systems—as well as the costs of meeting their basic subsistence needs—please refer to: World Bank (2023). The Global Cost of Inclusive Refugee Education: 2023 Update; UNHCR & World Bank (2024). The Global Cost of Refugee Inclusion in Host Countries' Health Systems; UNHCR & World Bank (2024). Economic Participation and the Global Cost of International Assistance in Support of Refugee Subsistence Needs. The calculations are based on the most current data available at the time of publication.

32 Complementary assistance in the current situation, partial and full economic participation scenarios include the additional proportional administrative costs, resulting in total figures higher than the total benchmark scenario.

33 World Bank and UNHCR (2016), "Yes in my backyard? The economics of refugees and their social dynamics in Kakuma, Kenya", (Report No. 111303). Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

34 Ibáñez, A. M., Moya, A., Ortega, M. A., Rozo, S. V., & Urbina, M. J. (2025). "Life out of the shadows: The impacts of regularization programs on the lives of forced migrants." Journal of the European Economic Association, 23(3), 941–982.

35 UNHCR & Deloitte (2025). "Poland: Analysis of the impact of refugees from Ukraine on the economy of Poland" — 2nd edition (June 2025).

36 UNHCR (2024). Global Report 2024.

37 Some of the Regional Plans are co-led: UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) co-lead the JRP and RMRP. UNHCR and UNDP co-lead the 3RP. For more information, see Refugee response plans.

38 The data presented here differs from that reported in the GCR Indicator Report 2023 due to additional new data reported and corrections of previously identified errors. Data are available for 152 countries regarding legal access to work, 139 countries for legal access to mobility, and 138 countries for de facto access to work. The analysis is limited to 88 countries, enabling a direct comparison over time.

39 Ethiopia (2024). Directive No. 1019/2024 to Implement Recognized Refugees' and Asylum Seekers' Right to Work. National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities; UNHCR (2024). Zambia Launches Landmark National Refugee Policy.

40 UNHCR, "Mexico marks a milestone: 50,000 refugees and asylum-seekers find stability and rebuild their lives," 6 March 2025.

41 Among the 79 countries that reported on their national education policies for refugees in 2024, 71 had previously submitted reports on their respective policies in 2022, as originally documented in the GCR Indicator Report 2023. The analysis of policy shifts is limited to these 71 countries, enabling a direct comparison over time.

42 Data on education policy for Europe in 2024 are not available.

43 International poverty lines vary by country depending on the country classification applicable in the survey year (see World Bank country classification). In low- and lower-middle-income countries, the $3 /day at 2021 PPP line is applied, whereas for upper-middle-income and high-income countries, the $8.3/day at 2021 PPP line is applied.

44 In Colombia, the refugee group refers to Venezuelan refugees and migrants. In Chile, it refers to Venezuelans, Colombians and Haitians with protection needs. In Costa Rica, it refers to Nicaraguan refugees and migrants.

45 Departure figures reported by UNHCR may not match resettlement statistics published by States, as government figures may include submissions received outside of UNHCR resettlement processes.

46 For more information on the different categories of complementary pathways, see Complementary pathways for admission to third countries: Definitions and basic elements.

47 The number of returns to Afghanistan from January to October 2025 exceeded 2.3 million. For more information, refer to the operational data on the Afghanistan situation.

48 UNHCR (2025, September 24). A million Syrians have returned home, but more support needed so millions more can follow. UNHCR Press Release.

49 UNHCR, in collaboration with partners, conducts intentions surveys and socio-economic insights surveys with refugees, IDPs and stateless persons to help UNHCR, governments, humanitarian and development actors develop evidenced-based responses.

50 The FDS is a comprehensive survey programme designed to collect nationally representative data on refugees and adjacent hosting communities across multiple thematic areas, including most priority SDG indicators. By integrating these indicators, the FDS ensures that forcibly displaced people are represented in national and international statistics and global policy planning.

51 Since its inception in 2016, under the auspices of the United Nations Statistical Commission, EGRISS has developed three sets of statistical recommendations on refugees, internally displaced persons, and statelessness statistics (IRRS, IRIS and IROSS, respectively) to guide Member States in producing data on these population groups. In addition, the group also serves as a collaborative platform for countries and other stakeholders to exchange experiences operationalizing the recommendations through peer-to-peer learning opportunities, documentation of good practices and the development of practical guidance such as the Compilers' Manual on Forced Displacement Statistics and the E-Learning. As of September 2025, EGRISS comprises 101 members, including 61 Members States and 40 regional and international organizations.

52 Since 2019, JDC has supported efforts to include forcibly displaced persons in national statistics in more than 35 countries. This enabled countries to expand surveys and censuses to displaced populations. The contribution is not only financial. JDC's technical support ranged from designing and adapting questionnaires and data collection strategies, to training enumerators in refugee-hosting areas and developing sampling methods that ensured remote and insecure locations were represented. These efforts have turned several GRF pledges into action.

53 OECD (2025), "Cuts in official development assistance: OECD projections for 2025 and the near term", OECD Policy Briefs, No. 26, OECD Publishing, Paris.

GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES INDICATOR REPORT 2025

FRONT COVER
Looking towards the future, the mural was created in collaboration with Syrian refugee youth and Jordanian host community youth in Amman, Jordan. The interwoven paintings by children reflect their aspirations for what lies ahead, with the girl gazing upward towards the sky. This artwork formed part of a broader initiative implemented across 65 schools in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the German Development Agency (GIZ). © ARTOLUTION, GIZ. Photo and mural credit: Suha Sultan.

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