

# West and Central Africa

January – March 2023

## Highlights

**218 Central African refugees** were assisted to return to their home country, mainly from **Cameroon** and the **Democratic Republic of Congo**.

The third **High-Level Conference on the Lake Chad Basin Region** was hosted in Niamey, **Niger**, in January.

**Refugees** will be included in the fourth **general population and housing census** in **Cameroon**, following the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding** between **UNHCR and BUCREP**.



UNHCR and partners support the Government of Niger in distributing birth certificates to forcibly displaced children to facilitate access to services and prevent statelessness ©UNHCR/Boubacar Younoussa Sidde

## Between January and March 2023:



**6,708 birth certificates** delivered to children in **Chad, Niger** and **Nigeria**.



**169 refugees** departed from **Chad** on resettlement to Australia, Canada, France, Norway, and the United States of America.



**3,480 school kits** distributed in Kalambari and Guilmeiy **camp** in **Chad**.



**2,131 children** received psychosocial support offered in child friendly spaces in Chadakori, Dan Dadji Makaou and Garin Kaka villages, and in Dan Kano, Elguidi, and Tiadi sites, in **Niger**.



**300 refugees** and **asylum seekers** with specific needs received health insurance for primary health care coverage in **Burkina Faso**.



**46,542 refugees** and **IDPs** provided with shelter kits and core relief items (CRIs) in **Niger** and **Nigeria**.

# Forcibly displaced and stateless people in West and Central Africa

UNHCR is mandated to protect and assist **13.1 million\*** people in West and Central Africa, including:



**1.6 million** refugees and asylum-seekers



**1.8 million** returned IDPs and refugees



**7.8 million** internally displaced persons (IDPs)

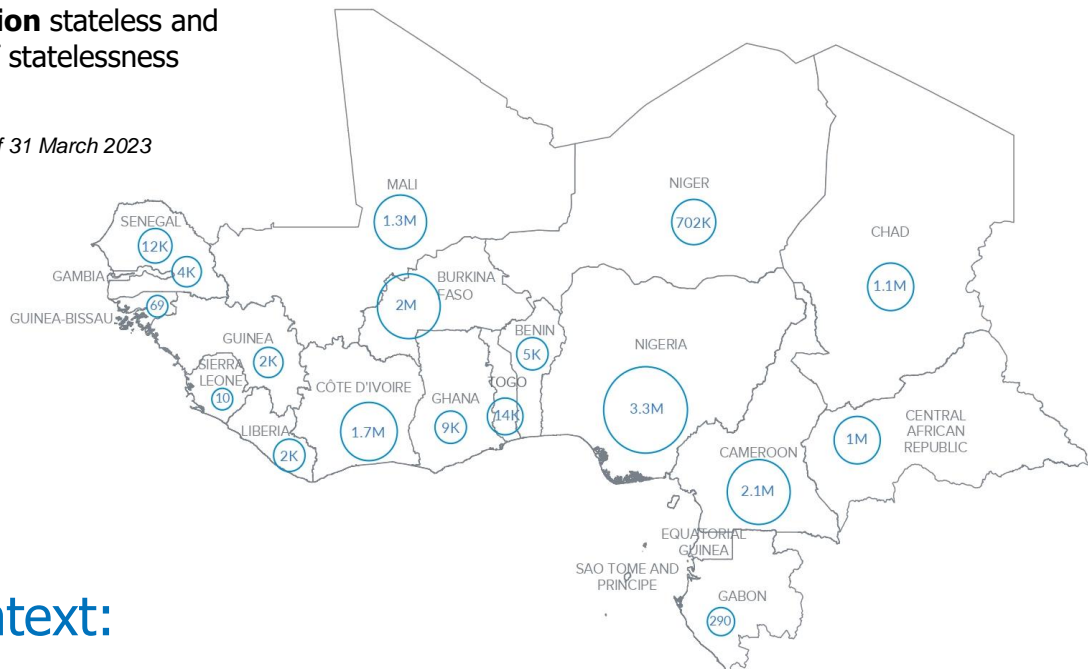


**0.1 million** refugee returnees



**1.6 million** stateless and at risk of statelessness

(\* the figures provided are as of 31 March 2023 and are all rounded)



## Regional context: Key developments

- **'State of Emergency' declared in Burkina Faso:** The security situation in Burkina Faso continues to deteriorate with increasing attacks from non-state armed groups and an intensifying military response. As of 31 March, the Government reported a total of 1,999,127 internally displaced persons. Amidst the continuing increase in violence and displacement, the transitional authorities declared a State of Emergency in 22 provinces spread over eight regions, for an initial period of one month, starting on 30 March. Moreover, the Government called for a 'general mobilization' of the population to reinforce the fight against non-state armed groups. UNHCR continues to meet the needs of the displaced population, despite access constraints and the limited available resources.
- **Increasing influx of asylum seekers from Burkina Faso to coastal countries:** As the Sahel conflict is spreading southward to the borders with Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo, an increasing number of arrivals has been noted across the four countries, the majority being women and children. UNHCR, in collaboration with Governments and partners, will scale up its presence in the affected countries, to ensure the provision of protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance.

- **Suspension of cash-based initiatives in Burkina Faso:** In mid-March, local authorities of Centre-North and the East Regions imposed a suspension of cash-based initiatives (CBI), which had already been suspended in the Sahel Region last November. The suspension jeopardizes the ability of humanitarian organizations to provide essential aid to those in need, particularly in hard-to-reach areas. Additionally, it may expose already vulnerable displaced persons to heightened protection risks, such as sexual exploitation and abuse. UNHCR has immediately started advocacy hoping to re-instate CBIs.
- **Naira notes crisis in Nigeria:** Due to the introduction of redesigned Naira notes and revised withdrawal limits, Nigeria experienced a severe scarcity of new Naira notes, adversely affecting the public's access to goods and services, including refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Food security and livelihood sectors were particularly impacted. As a result, UNHCR had to suspend cash-in-hand distributions for Cameroonian refugees in the country, adversely affecting this already vulnerable population. At the end of March 2023, the three-month-long cash shortage began to ease after the government's decision to reintroduce and circulate old currency notes.
- **New bill signed in Nigeria:** The President of Nigeria [signed into law](#) the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced People Act Bill on 15 February 2023, in line with Nigeria's 2019 pledges to the Global Refugee Forum. While strengthening Nigeria's institutional structures and processes, the law will contribute to enhance the protection environment for forcibly displaced persons.
- **New Nationality law in Benin:** The new nationality law, adopted by the national assembly in November 2022 and promulgated by the President of the Republic in December 2022, was broadcasted in the official gazette in February 2023. As a major development, the new nationality code removed gender discriminatory provisions contained in the previous code, fulfilling the country's pledge made at the High-Level Segment (HLS) on Statelessness. In addition, the new code establishes the jus soli as a mean to acquire nationality in Benin.
- **Regional Statelessness Conference:** UNHCR and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) convened the regional meeting of statelessness focal points from West and Central Africa from 27 to 30 March 2023 in Saly, Senegal. Among others, a pool of experts finalized and adopted the draft Regional Model Law on Statelessness Determination, Protection of Stateless Persons and Facilitation of their Naturalization, and conducted a stock tacking exercise related to level of implementation of the pledges made by the 17 countries of the region at the High-Level Segment on Statelessness held in 2019, the challenges faced and the opportunities to redouble efforts to end statelessness in the final year of the [#IBelong campaign](#).
- **ECOWAS integrated mission to Burkina Faso:** Following a request for support from the Government of Burkina Faso, ECOWAS' Department of Humanitarian and Social Affairs conducted an assessment mission to the country between 21 and 27 March. The mission included field visits and working sessions with national authorities and humanitarian actors, including UNHCR, and provided an opportunity for the Government of Burkina Faso and ECOWAS to convene on areas where ECOWAS could support in meeting the primary needs of the population affected by the current humanitarian crisis. Based on the needs identified, and in line with UNHCR advocacy efforts, ECOWAS agreed to financially support the IDP response in the country.

## Operational highlights

### Burkina Faso

- **Protection monitoring – Project 21 (P21):** Through the inter-agency protection monitoring system P21 significant progress was made in training partners on the new methodology and tools used. The protection data collected through P21 was presented to key inter-agency stakeholders, namely the Food Security and the Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI) Clusters, the National Network for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and abuse (PSEA), OCHA, and the Access Working Group, to concretely inform country-level humanitarian programming and planning processes.
- **Education:** Through the distribution of connectivity kits UNHCR will improve the education of over 10,000 displaced children, who will be able to access digital educational content and learn fundamentals such as reading, writing, counting, as well as to enhance their knowledge on science, mathematics, and languages. The distribution is part of a larger initiative which includes building new multimedia classrooms, providing computer equipment and solar radios, and training teachers and students in digital skills while raising awareness on child protection and psychosocial support.
- **Livelihoods:** Six artisan refugees from Ouagadougou, Dori, and Bobo-Dioulasso participated in the 16th edition of the Ouagadougou International Art & Craft Fair (SIAO), with the support of UNHCR and partner Vétérinaires Ssns Frontières Belgium. In addition to providing them with



Refugee artisans' booth at the 2023 Ouagadougou International Art and Crafts Fair (SIAO) ©UNHCR/Moussa Bougma

a platform to showcase their work and generate income, their participation in the fair helped to promote integration into the local community, by fostering a positive image of refugees.

Additionally, UNHCR and partners supported the establishment of three gardening sites equipped with a large diameter well in Dori, benefiting 60 Malian refugees. Another site was set up in Bobo-Dioulasso, with a borehole and a water tower to facilitate irrigation, supporting 26 refugees. Lastly, UNHCR supported 31 young urban refugees from Ouagadougou to obtain a driving license to be able to work in the transport sector in the future.

- **Health:** Aiming at enhancing access to public health services for refugees and asylum seekers UNHCR has been advocating for them to have access to medical insurance for primary health care. As of March, a total of 300 refugees and asylum seekers with specific needs are enrolled in a health insurance programme. Additionally, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR donated 2,500 protective masks to four hospitals in Ouagadougou.
- **Shelter and core relief items (CRIs):** Over the past three months, UNHCR and its partners NRC and AIRD have provided a total of 4,800 shelters to displaced and host families, benefitting 22,084 persons. In addition, 1,715 CRIs kits were provided to 11,023 persons. The support provided served to improve the living conditions, physical safety, and dignity of IDPs and host communities.

## Cameroon Multi-Country Office (Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe)

### Cameroon

- **Protection:** On 10 March 2023, a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) was signed between UNHCR and the Central Bureau of Census and Population Studies (BUCREP). The agreement aims at guaranteeing the inclusion of refugees in the fourth general population and housing census in Cameroon. It will facilitate the identification of refugees and IDPs. It represents the first step toward socio-economic integration, as the socio-economic data collected will serve to engage governments and development actors to plan and sustainably fund inclusive programmes.
- **Solutions:** As of May, the Comité des Réfugiés dans les Communes du Cameroun (Refugee Committee of the Communes of Cameroon) was accredited by the Ministry of Internal Administration through a legal decree. This accreditation heightens the capacity of the refugee association to represent the members' interests next to the national authorities and facilitate inclusion.
- **Flood Response:** The heavy rains in Buea town, Southwest region, in March 2023 caused flooding and mudslides which led to displacement of people leaving in the valley. Under OCHA coordination, UNHCR and other humanitarian partners conducted a joint assessment and estimated that over 150 households and 120 local shops suffered flood damage; approximately 1,000 persons lost their livelihoods (livestock, grains, crops, shops). UNHCR and partners have provided support to the affected population through the distribution of dignity kits and core relief items.
- **Environment:** UNHCR Cameroon, the [Centre for International Forestry Research \(CIFOR\)](#) and the [International Centre for Research in Agroforestry \(ICRAF\)](#) signed a memorandum of understanding on 23 March 2023. The partnership will serve to support communities affected by displacement while ensuring the sustainable management of forest resources and conservation of the environment.

### Equatorial Guinea:

- **Protection:** Between 23 January to 1 February, UNHCR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation jointly held a training on Asylum and Refugee Law in Malabo. Participants to the training included legal and policy advisors, as well as technical staff from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality, the Cabinet of the Ministry to the Presidency of the Government responsible for Human Rights, the Ministry of National Security and the Ombudsman Office. The training was a result of Equatorial Guinea's commitment towards enhancing its national protection space for refugees by developing a national legal framework for asylum, in line with the pledge submitted by the country at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum and at the African Union Extraordinary Humanitarian Summit and Pledging Conference.

### Central African Republic (CAR)

- **Solutions:** With the security situation improving in certain areas of CAR, voluntary repatriation of refugees, mainly from Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo continued and between January and March, a total of 218 persons (110 households) were assisted to return. Returnees received financial assistance to support their immediate needs during the travel.
- **Protection:** In March, UNHCR conducted a four-day workshop in Bangui on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuses (PSEA). The workshop targeted about thirty members of the national PSEA network in Bangui and it aimed at enhancing their understanding and skills on PSEA and enabling them to conduct investigations at field level according to established standards and procedures.

- **High-level missions:** A joint high-level mission including the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, the Central African Minister for Humanitarian Action, and the African Development Bank (AfDB) took place between 21 and 25 February. The delegation travelled to Bria in Haute Kotto prefecture, which hosts the largest site for internally displaced persons, to assess the situation and discuss the appropriate response.

## Chad

- **Protection:** On 22 March, UNHCR and the la Commission Nationale d'Accueil et de Réintégration des Réfugiés et Rapatriés - CNARR (National Commission for the Reception and Reintegration of Refugees and Returnees) trained 47 representatives from local authorities in Eastern Chad on Chad's Law on Asylum. Participants included representatives of local administrative, military, and traditional authorities and partners working in the city of Amdjarass, in Ennedi-Est Region in Northern Chad. The aim of the workshop was to ensure that authorities across the country understand the law and its implications and can effectively play their role in protecting the asylum space and ensure that refugees and asylum seekers fully enjoy their rights.
- **Solutions:** Between January and March 2023, 169 refugees of Central African and Sudanese nationality departed to Australia, Canada, France, Norway, and the United States of America on resettlement. Among those that travelled were survivors of violence and torture and women at risk, who will have the opportunity to build a new life. Additionally, three individuals departed for Canada and France for family reunification.

On 7 February, UNHCR Chad conducted a go-and-see mission to Cameroon to explore the possibility to support the voluntary return of Cameroonian refugees. During the mission, the delegation met with local authorities and communities to discuss possible returns and peaceful coexistence. Since the crisis in 2021, over 12,900 refugees from Cameroon have already returned home from Chad.

- **Documentation:** CNARR and UNHCR distributed a total of 793 birth certificates to refugee children in Goz Amir camp, in the Sila province. Birth registration is crucial to ensure that children will enjoy their civil rights and have access to basic social services. On 27 February, the Agence Nationale Des Titres Sécurisés – ANATS (National Agency for Secure Titles), responsible for civil documentation in Chad, in partnership with UNHCR, launched a campaign to hand over national identity cards issued in 2022 to IDPs, in Bol, Mamdi department, Lac Region. A total of 6,395 ID cards were delivered. The campaign is the result of UNHCR's advocacy and is part of the socio-economic reintegration process of IDPs in Chad. It also contributes to the fulfilment of Action 8 of the [Global Action Plan to End Statelessness](#).

- **Livelihoods:** UNHCR and local authorities supported the opening of a community solar-powered fishery in Baga Sola, managed by refugees, IDPs, and host community members. The fishery provides innovative solutions for the transformation and storage of fish. It helps the groups of fishermen develop their activities along the fishery value chain, increase their income and support the gradual self-sufficiency of refugees, IDPs and host communities involved.



Refugees, Internally Displaced and host community at the solar powered fishery in Baga Sola, Chad  
 ©UNHCR/Robert Petron Messe

- **Education:** On 13 March 2023, UNHCR and its implementing partner Jesuit Refugee Service, along with the Chadian government, school officials, and local parents' association, organized the handover of 29 classrooms, 3 administrative blocks and a multi-sport field to the Ministry of Education at the Kalambari public school, Chari-Baguirmi province. These facilities will allow more than 2,550 Cameroonian refugees and Chadian children in Kalambari to access quality education in a protected environment.

Additionally, UNHCR distributed pedagogical kits to 30 teachers and school supply kits, including uniforms, bags, shoes, veils, to more than 3,480 refugee children and youth in the two Cameroonian refugee camps of Kalambari and Guilmeiy. Over 1,880 hygiene kits were also distributed to girls.

## Côte d'Ivoire

- Protection:** Asylum seekers from Burkina Faso continue to arrive and as of March 2023 over 7,500 individuals were registered. As UNHCR and the Direction d'aide et d'assistance aux réfugiés et apatrides – DAARA (Department of Aid and Assistance for Refugees and Stateless Persons) register them, the Office national de l'Etat Civil et de l'Identification – ONECI (National Civil Status and Identification Office) provides them with a receipt, based on which they will receive a unique identifier number. This number is recorded in the national centralized database and will grant refugees access to key social services.



Registration of asylum seekers from Burkina Faso in Ouangolodougou ©UNHCR/Sulaiman Momodu

- Statelessness:** On 26 January 2023, the second meeting with the national statelessness working group took place in Abidjan. The meeting was attended by high-level representatives from State institutions and NGOs working on the implementation of the national action plan for the eradication of statelessness. The main objective was to adopt a roadmap of priority initiatives to be implemented over the remaining year of the [#IBelong Global Campaign](#). During the meeting, ONECI presented a project related to the possibility to provide a unique identifier to stateless persons, granting them access to several administrative procedures and social services. If implemented this will be a considerable step towards the inclusion of stateless persons in population and identification (ID) management systems, strengthening their protection and immensely improve the life of stateless persons in Côte d'Ivoire.
- On 25 February, in commemoration of the 8th anniversary of the Abidjan Declaration, UNHCR and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights released a press statement in the newspaper "Fraternité Matin" titled 'Everyone has the right to a nationality'. The statement highlighted the achievements made since the launch of the #I Belong Campaign to eradicate statelessness and outlines the remaining actions to be taken in the next two years, such as ensuring that no child is born stateless, by domesticating the provision of international conventions ratified by Cote d'Ivoire, and conduct a joint campaign on the causes and solutions of statelessness among the concerned population in the country.

## Ghana

- Arrivals from Burkina Faso:** As the security situation worsens in Burkina Faso, asylum seekers continued to arrive to Ghana during the first quarter of the year. While approximately 6,000 individuals have been estimated to have arrived in the country, to date about 1,117 new asylum seekers from Burkina Faso were registered. In February the UNHCR Country Representative, together with the Executive Secretary of the Ghana Refugee Board (GRB) and other officials visited Bawku West District of Ghana, and met some of the communities hosting asylum seekers to assess the situation. The main needs identified included access to shelter, food, education, health and livelihoods.

- In February, UNHCR and the Ghana Refugee Board jointly convened a High-Level Consultative Dialogue with key government stakeholders on the influx of asylum seekers from Burkina Faso. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the development of a response plan for the Upper East and Upper West Regions – the two regions hosting most of the asylum seekers. Participants included the Ministry of Interior, the GRB, Regional Ministers and District Chief Executives from the affected areas, the Ghana Immigration Service, the Ghana Police Service, and the National Intelligence Bureau. The meeting highlighted the importance for UNHCR and GRB, as the key coordinators in refugee emergency, to establish a presence in the North of Ghana. As a result of the meeting, land was provided from the Government to set up a reception centre and a settlement to accommodate new arrivals. UNHCR and partners are working to scale up their presence in the affected areas and enhance the response.

## Liberia

- Statelessness:** The Final Validation Conference of the National Action Plan on Statelessness was held on 15-16 February 2023. Participants included representatives from several Government Institutions, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Immigration Services, the Liberian Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), as well as representatives from the Economic Community of WEST African States (ECOWAS), UN Agencies, and civil society organizations. Thanks to UNHCR support to the government, the Plan was validated by all relevant stakeholders, signed by the LRRRC and formally presented to the Ministry of Internal Affairs for onward submission to the Cabinet for endorsement



*Final Validation Conference for the National Action Plan for Statelessness, February 2023 ©LRRRC/Samuel David*

- Solutions:** Following the cessation of the refugee status for Ivorian nationals, UNHCR in collaboration with the LRRRC and the Ivorian Embassy in Monrovia jointly designed a verification form for the former Ivorian refugees who opted to remain in Liberia but lack documentation proving their country of origin. UNHCR and LRRRC supported Ivorian nationals in filling the forms and submitted them to the Ivorian Embassy for processing, hoping they will be granted passports, based on which they could receive residency permits in Liberia.
- Cash-based interventions:** The Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Household Survey for 2022 Cash Based Intervention (CBI) was launched on 28 March 2023. The objective of the exercise is to gather information on whether the cash was used for the intended purpose, namely livelihood activities such as farming, animal husbandry or small businesses, and on the effectiveness of the distribution system. A total of 304 refugees and host Liberians were supported with financial assistance in 2022 across Montserrado, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, and Maryland Counties and a random sample of 44% of those assisted will be interviewed. Findings from the 2022 CBI PDM survey will provide valuable insights for the impact of the cash assistance provided by UNHCR and help to improve future cash-based interventions.

## Mali

- Registration:** From February 28 to March 22, a registration exercise targeting newly arrived asylum seekers from Burkina Faso and Niger took place in Gossi, Timbuktu region. A total of 2,976 individuals, including 2,774 Burkinabe and 202 Nigeriens were registered.
- Solutions:** As part of the naturalization programme of Mauritanian refugees, launched in 2014, a community mobilization campaign was conducted in the Kayes region in February with the



support of UNHCR's partners Stop Sahel, and 150 refugees who wish to naturalize were identified. With the support of UNHCR a collective request for their naturalization was submitted to the High Court of Kayes for consideration.

In March, in collaboration with the Malian Government, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 12 Central African refugees to their country of origin (the Central African Republic). UNHCR covered travel expenses and provided financial assistance to cover other travel related costs.

- **Shelter and Core relief items (CRIs):**

UNHCR distributed CRIs to 477 (61 households) to newly arrived refugees from Burkina Faso in the communes of Tominian and Bènèna, San Region, central Mali, in February. CRIs included kitchen kits, mosquito nets, blanket, solar lamps for lighting, mats, buckets and jerry cans. Between January and March UNHCR conducted several distributions in the Timbuktu, Menaka and Gao Regions. CRI kits were distributed also to 82 IDP households in Mopti, and to 428



*Distribution of core relief items to refugees from Burkina Faso in Tominian commune, San Region, Mali ©UNHCR-Mopti*

households in Gossi and Inadiatafane in the Timbuktu region. In the Menaka Region, UNHCR built 215 emergency shelters and distributed 750 tarpaulins for IDPs and refugees. A total of 621 refugee households received CRI kits in Labbezanga and Ansongo, in the Gao Region.

In February UNHCR supported 126 Nigerien refugees (40 households) with special needs in the Ménaka region, through provisions of food, shelter, core relief items, baby kits, clothes for pregnant women and access to medical care. Among those who received the items were elderlies, women at risk, and separated children.

- **Livelihoods:** In March, UNHCR facilitated the departure of two young Central African refugees to attend a four-month training course in Human Resources, Finance Management and Transport Logistics at the BIOFORCE center in Dakar. Attending the course will support refugees in acquiring new skills and become more competitive on the job market.

## Niger

- **Child protection:** In February and March, UNHCR and partners provided psychosocial support to 2,131 children offered in child-friendly spaces in Chadakori, Dan Dadji Makaou and Garin Kaka 'Villages d'opportunités' and the sites of Dan Kano, Elguidi, and Tiadi in Guidan Roundji division. Over 4,000 children benefitted from awareness raising sessions on child protection issues such as early and forced marriages, school attendance and personal hygiene.
- **Documentation and statelessness:** During the reporting period, 1,500 birth certificates were delivered to refugees, internally displaced, and Nigerien returnee children in the municipality of Guidan Roundji, Maradi Region. The documents were issued and distributed through mobile courts hearings organized by the judicial authorities with the support of UNHCR. Similar court hearings will be organized in Chadakori, also in the Maradi region, as well as in the Dosso and Zinder Regions. As part of the statelessness prevention activities in Diffa region, UNHCR and its partners supported the issuance of 3,015 birth certificates for children between 0 and 6 years of age, whose birth was not registered withing the government advice timeframe. In addition, 2,070 birth certificates were provided to adults at risk of statelessness, who had no civil documentation; of these, 1,129 were women.

- Solutions:** As of March, and since the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) was launched in 2017, a total of 3,732 evacuations were supported. Furthermore, some 5,382 persons travelled to third countries under resettlement or through complementary pathways. Additionally, quick impact projects, such as market gardening, small business, welding training, were implemented through the ETM Centre and targeted both refugees and host communities at Hamdallaye and the surrounding localities.



*Refugees at the ETM Centre contribute to the local economy through food processing and handicraft activities supported by UNHCR and its partners © UNHCR/Antonia Vadala*

- High-level events:** On 23-24 January, the third [High-Level on the Lake Chad Region](#), hosted by Niger, was convened by the Governments of Germany, Norway, and by the United Nations (UNDP and OCHA) in Niamey. The conference brought together representatives from various States, regional and international organizations, as well as representatives from national and international civil society organizations to renew political and public attention on the crisis in the region and to reaffirm the commitment to address the ongoing humanitarian, security, and development challenges in the Lake Chad Basin region. The UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations Mr. Raouf Mazou and Bureau Director for West & Central Africa Ms. Millicent Mutuli attended the conference. In total, around USD 500 million in financial pledges were made during the conference, demonstrating a renewed commitment by the international community to support the Lake Chad region.
- Access to land and housing:** As part of the social housing project in Tillabéri, the construction of 2,178 houses, to be allocated to refugees and internally displaced person, was completed, including 1,350 in Abala, 790 in Ouallam and 38 in Ayorou. In addition, UNHCR and its partners, in collaboration with the Government, allocated social plots to 2,473 households including refugees and internally displaced persons aiming at enhancing social cohesion and facilitating housing and access to land for Malian refugees and internally displaced.
- Core Relief Items (CRI):** In Tahoua Region, Niger, in March, UNHCR and its partners completed the distribution of emergency shelter kits and clothing items for 11,161 people (2,647 households) in the villages of Guidan Ahmed, Jataka, Kataguir, Maikourou, Doukou-Doukou and Takorka in the Tilia and Madaoua divisions. In addition, 16,088 refugees (1,032 households) and 8,132 IDPs (511 households) also received CRIs including tarpaulins for emergency shelters, buckets, jerry cans, blankets, mosquito nets, and clothing. This assistance has significantly improved the living conditions of forcibly displaced people and vulnerable members of the host community.

## Nigeria

- Durable solutions – voluntary repatriation:** In January 2023, a total of 1,319 (349 households) Nigerian refugees voluntarily repatriated from Cameroon to Banki town, Bama Local Government Area of Borno State. A total of 300 transitional shelters were constructed to accommodate GBV survivors, in Borno State's Monguno LGA.
- Registration and documentation:** Over 11,000 Cameroonian refugees were registered during the ongoing comprehensive registration and verification exercise in Nigeria. Some 7,000 received proof of registration issued by the Nigerian Government and UNHCR. With the support of UNHCR and its partners, the National Population Commission issued birth certificates to approximately 1,400 Cameroonian refugee and IDP children in Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States to serve as a protection tool, a tool to prevent statelessness and facilitate access to social services.

- **Gender-based violence (GBV):** In Benue State, UNHCR and its partner identified and provided psychosocial and material support to over 80 IDPs who are survivors of gender-based violence. About 1,600 IDPs were reached through awareness raising programmes on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, gender-based violence, child protection, and on the importance of registering births and deaths.
- **Mixed Movements:** On 2 February, UNHCR and the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons [premiered an anti-trafficking \(short\) film](#) titled “[Dangerous Hope](#)”. The film actors comprise mostly Cameroonian refugees. The 25-minute film examines human trafficking in the context of forced displacement, and it aims at raising awareness, including among refugees and IDPs, on trafficking, on how to prevent it and on available support for survivors.
- **Core relief items (CRIs):** UNHCR, delivered core relief items (CRI's) to around 16,600 new Cameroonian refugee arrivals (2,046 households) of in Adamawa State's Local Government Areas of Mubi North, Mubi South, Michika, and Madagali. CRIs distributed included safety nets, and livelihood support for persons under its mandate.

## Senegal Multi-Country Office (Benin, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo)

### Benin

- **Protection:** As of March, over 1,100 new asylum seekers from Burkina Faso have been registered in Benin, and the majority of them have been recognized as refugees by the Government on a prima facie basis. While access to refugees remains a challenge due to the remoteness of their areas of arrival, UNHCR is working with the authorities, the Resident Coordinator's Office, UN sister agencies and other relevant stakeholders to coordinate the response.
- UNHCR has been providing technical and financial support to its partner SP-CNR to carry out registration activities in urban and rural areas, refugee status determination, and awareness raising targeting refugees and host communities on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. Additionally, 12 staff from SP-CNR were trained on prevention and reduction of statelessness.

### Gambia

- **Protection:** UNHCR supported its partner the Gambian Commission for Refugees to train about 80 border officials on asylum seekers' identification and referral to the asylum procedures. In collaboration with the National Agency for Legal Aid (NALA) community outreach activities were conducted to raise refugees' awareness on their rights and responsibilities. Additionally, over 250 persons were reached in urban and rural areas, through awareness campaigns on gender-based violence (GBV).
- **Education:** UNHCR's partner GAFNA has supported 17 refugee students to enroll in certified vocational training courses. Additionally, the 10 refugee students selected for the DAFI scholarship programme have all received their allowance and their tuition fees have been fully paid.

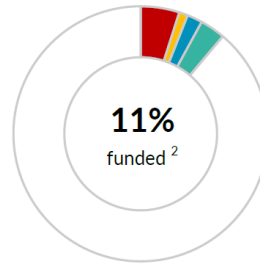
### Togo

- **Protection:** Arrivals from Burkina Faso to Togo continue. As of March, over 4,900 asylum seekers from Burkina Faso have been registered, and on 15 March, a total of 4,852 were granted refugee status by the Togolese authorities. Staff from the Senegal Multi-Country Office (MCO) Senegal has been deployed to Togo to support the response, in close collaboration with its governmental partners the Coordination Nationale d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Déplacés – CNAR (National Coordination for Assistance to Refugees and Displaced Persons).

- From 26 March to 1 April, UNHCR carried a mission with focus on gender-based violence (GBV), with the objective of developing GBV strategy in line with the under the project Safe from Start programme implemented by the U.S. to prevent gender-based violence (GBV) in humanitarian emergencies and protect survivors or those at risk. The recommendations from the mission including the need to enhancing community engagement; strengthen communication with communities and feedback mechanisms; focus on GBV prevention, response and mitigation, as well as on child protection programming.

## Funding Update

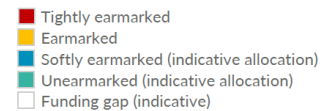
UNHCR's financial requirements for the West and Central Africa region in 2022 total **USD 914 million**. As of 28 March, only **11 per cent** of needs were funded. UNHCR is grateful to donors who have supported operations in West and Central Africa in 2023, including:



### FUNDING UPDATE | 2023

## WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

as of 28 March 2023



**Germany** 12.9 million | **European Union** 11.5 million | **Private donors USA** 7.3 million | **Japan** 4.5 million | **Denmark** 3.9 million | **Canada** 3.6 million | **Sweden** 3.5 million | **United Kingdom** 1.9 million | **Spain** 1.3 million | **Education Cannot Wait** 1.1 million | **Switzerland** 1 million | **Country-Based Pooled Funds** 1 million | **UN Peacebuilding Fund** 0.1 million | **Chad** 0.8 million | **Luxembourg** 0.4 million | **Monaco** 0.2 million | **UN Programme on HIV/AIDS** 0.2 million | **Iceland** 0.2 million | **Profuturo** 0.2 million | **Private donors France** 0.2 million | **African Development Bank Group** 0.1 million

**Flexible financial support** greatly facilitates UNHCR being able to kick-start an emergency response, bolster forgotten or under-resourced crises, and enable the fullest possible implementation of programmes. They enable UNHCR to plan and manage its resources efficiently and effectively, contributing to the collective success in every life that is transformed and saved. UNHCR is grateful to the donors that have provided unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions in 2023, including:

### OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

**Private donors Luxembourg** 5.1 million | **Canada** 3.9 million

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

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

UNHCR Global Appeal for 2023 can be found [here](#).

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