

Uganda

Quarter 1, 2024

By the end of March 2024, Uganda was hosting **1,660,524** refugees and asylum seekers. New arrivals have continued to enter the country, mainly from the DRC, Sudan, and South Sudan.

Since January 2024, Uganda has received 35,871 new arrivals of which 72% arrived through the border entry points mainly at Kisoro, Lokung, and Bundibugyo, and 28% were received in the urban areas, mainly Kampala.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan has also resulted in 14,453 Sudanese new arrivals since January 2024 representing 40% of the total new arrivals.

1,660,524

Number of refugees and asylum seekers as of 31 March 2024.

1,611,732

Total refugees in Uganda as of 31 March 2024.

48,792

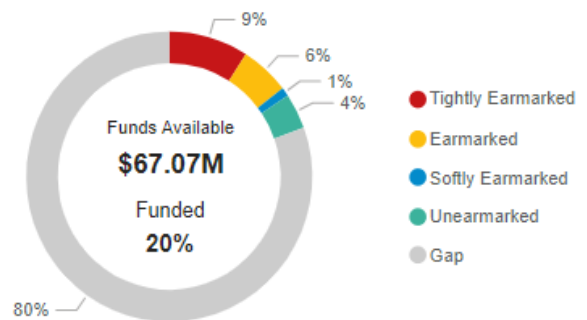
Total asylum-seekers in Uganda as of 31 March 2024.

** The total population figure is provisional and may change following completion of the ongoing verification exercise.*

UNHCR'S FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS 2024:

USD 343.4 million

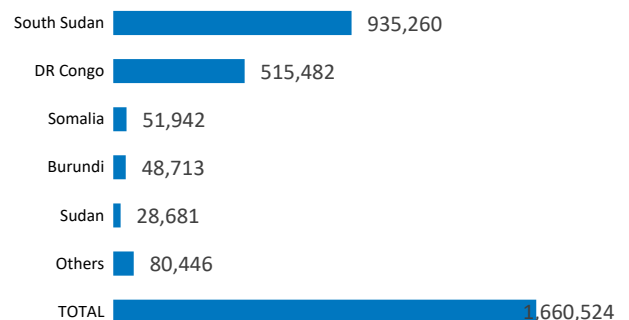
UNHCR Funding (as of 31 March 2024)



UNHCR Regional Bureau Director, Mamadou Dian Balde, visits a women and Girls' centre in Bidibidi Refugee Settlement during his visit to Uganda in February 2024.

POPULATIONS OF CONCERN:

Refugees and Asylum-Seekers by Nationality



Total refugees and asylum-seekers in Uganda as of 31 Mar 2024



New arrivals at the Ocea reception centre in Arua, as they receive critical assistance and protection services. Photo © UNHCR.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Sudanese influx and Prima facie recognition: Following the November 2023 ministerial declaration that granted prima facie recognition to Sudanese refugees who arrived in Uganda from 1 April 2023 onwards, Uganda received 14,453 new arrivals from Sudan (12,804 received in settlements, 1,649 received in Kampala) in the first quarter of 2024. In collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister and partners, the refugees have continuously been relocated from Nyumanzi Refugee Collection Point in Adjumani District to Kiryandongo refugee settlement (previously a non-receiving settlement). This trend of new arrivals is expected to continue.

Registration of Sudanese: In collaboration with UNHCR, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) established two registration desks in Kiryandongo settlement, one to cater for the registration of Sudanese new arrivals who chose to stay in Kiryandongo settlement, and the other for those who prefer to reside in Kampala. This facilitated formal residency and registration for Kampala based refugees and ensured that assistance is directed to those staying in the settlement as per UNHCR policy.

Digitalization Program: The World Food Programme, as part of its strategy to streamline financial processes by systematically transitioning refugees from conventional in-kind assistance to cash-based assistance, rolled out a mass voluntary enrolment program for agency banking with the initial phase, which started in February 2024, focusing on registering all refugees receiving cash assistance on Agency Banking. The second phase, planned for June 2024, will focus on registering those receiving in-kind assistance. WFP anticipates that, by July 2024, all beneficiaries settled in locations where Cash-Based Transfer (CBT) is above 50 percent will receive assistance through Agent Banking or Mobile Money.

US Delegation Visit to Kiryandongo Settlement: A delegation from USA-PRM conducted a field visit to Kiryandongo from 25-26 March 2024 and conducted a high-level meeting with representatives from UNHCR, OPM, and NGO partners, focus group discussions with newly arrived Sudanese individuals, as well as visits to the reception center, a primary school and a health center. The visit provided valuable insights into the newly arrived refugee situation in Kiryandongo, and the impactful initiatives implemented by UNHCR, OPM, and their partners to respond to the increasing number of new arrivals from Sudan.

Voluntary Repatriation to Burundi: On 28th of February 2024, 264 Burundian refugees (72 households) were facilitated by UNHCR to voluntarily repatriate to Burundi in the 38th convoy. This included 51 onward movers from Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp. Cumulatively, UNHCR has facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 13,192 Burundian refugees that had sought asylum

in Uganda since the resumption of voluntary repatriation in December 2020. However, reintegration challenges in Burundi and funding constraints have reduced refugees' interest to return home.

Mission of the Regional Bureau Director: The Regional Bureau Director, Mamadou Dian Balde, had a week-long mission to Uganda. During his visit, he met with the staff, partners, and government officials in Rhino Camp and Bidibidi and the West Nile region.

NAM and G77 Summits: The 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) took place in Kampala, Uganda, from 15–20 January 2024, under the theme, “Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence”. Uganda is set to take the NAM Chairmanship for a four-year period (2024–2027). The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres who was in Uganda to attend the summit closed the NAM Summit and opened the Group of 77 and China (G77 + China) Third South Summit, held from 18–22 January 2024 under the theme, “Leaving No One Behind”.

PGA Visit to Refugee Centre: On 20 January 2024, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, H.E. Dennis Francis, visited a refugee community centre in Kampala from where some of refugees living in Kampala access services. On 21 January 2024, H.E. Francis and the Secretary General held a townhall meeting with all UN staff in Uganda.

ECHO Mission: The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations delegation conducted a mission to Kiryandongo settlement on 28 February 2024, assessing the reception conditions for newly arrived Sudanese refugees. The delegation visited key areas such as the reception center, health facility, and shelters. The EU Humanitarian Aid representation in Uganda plans to integrate Sudanese arrivals into the 2024 Humanitarian Implementation Plan to mobilize and advocate for increased funding and community involvement in finding solutions for the Sudanese caseload.



PROTECTION

Achievements and impact

Refugee Status Determination (RSD): In the first quarter, the Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) monitored several border points in southwestern Uganda, meeting with partners, district officials, and border authorities to assess arrival patterns, evolving situations in the DRC, secondary movements, and reception facilities.

Access to justice: 13,390 individuals (6,585 women and 6,805 men) received sensitization on Ugandan and Refugee Law. Additionally, 1,145 individuals (79F, 1,066M) benefited from legal assistance, in the form of mobile court sessions, material support, detention monitoring visits, and legal representation.

Accountability to Affected Populations: A total of 17,336 complaints were addressed through effective feedback and response mechanisms, with 146 coming from the host community. 43% of the total requests were received via the inter-agency Feedback, Referral and Resolution Mechanism (FRRM), and 57% through other mechanisms. 7,520 new queries were received and referred through the FRRM helpline, while 9,816 new queries were received, referred, and addressed by partners through protection/help desks, complaints, and suggestion boxes.

Community Based Protection (CBP): A cumulative total of 74 suicide cases were reported by the end of this quarter, with 57 attempted suicides, 15 deaths by suicide, and 2 repeat attempts. The high number of suicide cases raises significant concerns about the mental health and well-being of affected individuals. Women are prioritized in this support, as they display a higher suicide incidence rate.

Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE): Partners engaged with development actors to strengthen GEWE in the response. A training on the UN Gender Equality Marker was conducted for UN agencies. Discussions with civil society organizations, including the Charter for Change (C4C) Working Group, focused on the Localization Agenda within the Refugee Response, providing objectives and strategic directions from partners. Partners implemented 99 gender-focused peaceful coexistence projects across settlements with the Government and inter-governmental bodies supporting at least 43 of these projects.

Statelessness: UNHCR facilitated Member of Parliament Hon. Jacob Karubanga's attendance at the World Conference on Statelessness from February 26 to 29 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where he shared Uganda's experience. Karubanga champions the Constitutional (Amendment) Bill 2022, which seeks to include indigenous stateless communities in Schedule 3 of the 1995 Ugandan Constitution. In March, UNHCR actively engaged in addressing statelessness in Uganda: a government legal study on statelessness was completed and is under review by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a community engagement campaign was initiated across five districts to encourage census participation among indigenous stateless communities, and efforts are being made to integrate long-term refugees into the national fabric while navigating legal and bureaucratic complexities.

Gender Based Violence (GBV): By the end of March, 1,089 GBV incidents were recorded and appropriately supported. Funding constraints have caused several operational partners to exit the operation, creating significant gaps in GBV services, particularly in Rhino Camp and Imvepi Settlements where several International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOS) have withdrawn alongside the resources they used to mobilize for these services.

International Women's Day was commemorated in all settlements and Kampala under the global theme "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress" and the national theme "Accelerating Gender Equality through Women Economic Empowerment."

Support to Persons with Specific Needs: There are 403,335 (284,485F, 118,850M) PSNs in Uganda operation as of the end of Q1 2024. A total of 9,950 individuals have been supported by partner organizations. Across the 13 settlements, interventions addressing mental health challenges have reached 79,047 individuals (45,965F, 33,082M). Additionally, 5,596 host community members have received mental health support.

Legal and Physical Protection: In March, Chief Justice Alphonse Owiny-Dollo launched a High Court Circuit in Kitgum to bring judicial services closer to the people, reducing logistical challenges like transport costs. UNHCR and Protection Partners facilitated witness attendance at court sessions to support access to justice. Community outreach legal awareness sessions on refugee rights and obligations were conducted to enhance understanding of Uganda's laws. A total of 13,390 individuals (6,585F, 6,805M) benefited from sensitization on the Ugandan and Refugee Law while 1,145 individuals (79F, 1,066M) benefited from mobile courts sessions in the settlement, material support, detention monitoring visits and legal representation.

Detention monitoring is the systematic observation, assessment, and oversight of places where individuals are deprived of their liberty, such as prisons, detention centers, immigration facilities, and police holding cells to ensure that the rights and well-being of detainees or prisoners are upheld according to national and international standards. UNHCR advocates for improvements in conditions and practices within detention facilities to protect the rights of detainees. This includes monitoring conditions of detention, treatment of detainees, access to legal representation, access to justice through mobile courts, healthcare services, and adherence to due process.

Between January and June 2024, detention monitoring efforts benefitted a total of 733 individuals (23F, 710M). These received material support, legal representation, and reintegration assistance upon release from detention facilities. It's notable that some of those reached were host community members found in detention centers. This support ensured that detainees' rights were protected and that they received necessary assistance during and after their period of detention.

UNHCR provided two capacity-building trainings to 40 partner staff in Kampala and 25 partner staff in Imvepi and Rhino Camp refugee settlements. The trainings covered international protection, community-based approaches, and other topics. Sector specific trainings will be conducted for Partners in Kampala.

Child Protection: In March, UNHCR and UNICEF signed a Letter of Understanding to advance the inclusion of refugee children into Uganda's national child protection systems. They also concluded a UN-to-UN agreement in which UNHCR facilitated financial support from EU/INTPA, to support UNICEF in addressing the birth registration backlog for over 90,000 South Sudanese refugees. UNHCR and UNICEF are coordinating the Child Protection Working Group for the Refuge Response. Currently, children make up 57% of the total refugee population, with 55,188

children with specific protection needs, and 20,048 active child protection cases recorded and supported by UNHCR and partners during the reporting period.

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways: In the first quarter of 2024, 915 individuals were submitted for resettlement, bringing the total to 1,252, reaching 24% of the annual target of 5,200. UNHCR estimates that 135,000 refugees in Uganda need resettlement in 2024, with established referral pathways aiming for 5,000 submissions to the USA, 100 to Canada, and 100 to Sweden. UNHCR also supports refugees in accessing complementary pathways (CP) such as education, labor opportunities, family reunification, and private sponsorships. By the end of March, UNHCR had assisted 270 out of 518 individual departures to access complementary pathways through family reunification and private sponsorships, while 1,068 individuals have departed for third countries in 2024.

Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): In the first Quarter, the UN Inter-Agency PSEA stakeholders convened and agreed on the principal PSEA activities for 2024. UNHCR also facilitated training on PSEA, the code of conduct, and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for Refugee Welfare Councils (RWC), Local Council (LC) leaders, and implementing partners. Next steps include increasing efforts to raise awareness about safe and confidential reporting channels.

Challenges and Gaps

- **Legal Assistance:** Limited funding for legal representation, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient resources for community outreach and mobile court sessions continue to hinder access to justice for refugees and host communities.
- **Refugee Status Determination:** Insufficient stakeholder training, high numbers of secondary movers, and accommodation for security-related cases (safe houses).
- **Child Protection:** Insufficient number of case workers compared to the caseload. The case worker-to-children-at-risk ratio is 1:229, marking a significant increase from 1:97 at the beginning of 2023.



EDUCATION:

Achievements and impact

Gross Enrolment (GER): In Term 1 of 2024, data from 662 settlement schools and 475 host community schools showed a total of 626,804 students (421,517 refugees and 205,287 nationals) were enrolled, representing 93% of the targeted 674,895 learners, down from 657,922 in 2023. This decline may be attributed to the removal of blanket scholastic material distribution, and reduced food rations. Across the refugee-hosting districts and urban areas as of early 2024, refugee enrollment stands at 43% for pre-primary, 96% for primary, and 10% for secondary levels. Additionally, approximately 89,410 host community children are accessing education through UNHCR-supported schools.

Quality Education and Skills training: Delivery of quality education and skills training has been a priority, evidenced by various metrics. Improved delivery of quality education and skills training remains a priority, but significant gaps persist. The pupil-teacher ratio stands at 1:58 for pre-primary and 1:79 for primary levels. Infrastructure challenges include a pupil-classroom ratio of 1:92 for pre-primary, 1:126 for primary, and 1:81 for secondary, with a shortage of 4,041 primary classrooms. The pupil-stance ratio for sanitation is 1:49 for pre-primary, 1:63 for primary, and 1:29 for secondary, with a gap of 2,396 latrine stances in primary schools. Additionally, the pupil-desk ratio is 1:6 for primary and 1:3 for secondary, with a shortfall of 59,388 desks in primary schools. The teacher gap in primary schools is 2,315.

Systems strengthening: The latest data shows that the vast majority of education institutions in the refugee operation have robust school management structures in place - 85% of pre-primary schools, 96% of primary schools, and 98% of secondary schools have functional management structures. This indicates a strong foundation for effective governance and administration across the education system, which is vital for delivering quality learning outcomes for students.

Challenges and Gaps

- Refugee children with extreme disabilities often cannot access education because of a lack of expertise to identify disabilities and insufficient resources to support them.
- Language barrier results in many refugee children being enrolled to grades lower for their age, which has led to some children dropping out of school as they fail to adjust to their new context.
- The inability of an overwhelmed national system to meet the education needs of a high number of children from both refugee and host communities.
- Pupil Teacher ratios across all refugee-hosting settlements are high and not conducive to quality learning, and yet Teacher retention rates are also low.
- Fluctuating enrollment numbers due to influxes of new arrivals, making planning difficult and disrupting the scholastic material supplies.
- Low attendance rates, often linked to issues like food insecurity and disease outbreaks among learners.



HEALTH

Achievements and impact

Health statistics: In Q1 2024, there were 467,355 registered consultations, with 29% nationals and 71% refugees, with each clinician handling an average of 46 consultations per day. The high number of consultations, amidst a substantial refugee population, underscores the ongoing demand for healthcare services in the refugee operation. The major disease burdens were malaria (30%), upper respiratory tract infections (12%), lower respiratory tract infections (9%), skin diseases (6%), and urinary tract infections (5%).

Mortality rates: During the reporting period, under-five and crude mortality rates remained low at 0.12 and 0.05 per 1,000 people per month, respectively, well within the standard thresholds of 1.5 and 0.75. The leading causes of mortality in the general population were malaria (13%), neonatal deaths (16%), lower respiratory tract infections (11%), anemia (4%), and liver diseases (6%). Both rates demonstrate a significant achievement in population health and positive strides in improving overall health conditions and reducing the risk of death across all age groups.

Live births: 11,684 (6,193 refugees, 5,491 nationals) live births were registered, of which 98 per cent were attended to by skilled health workers, with only 14 per cent requiring caesarean section procedures. This is a positive indicator of safer deliveries and quality maternal healthcare access with a substantial portion of the population, both refugees and nationals, having access to professional healthcare during childbirth.

HIV prevention, care, and treatment: A comprehensive HIV testing initiative was conducted across all settlements, reaching a total of 29,761 individuals out of which, 208 individuals tested positive and subsequently enrolled in dedicated HIV care and treatment programs. 95% of those who tested positive were referred to receive treatment.

Challenges and Gaps

- Existence of temporary infrastructures that need to be replaced with durable structures. The lack of privacy in these temporary structures has led to poor health care-seeking behavior, particularly among pregnant mothers for antenatal care and delivery services.
- 86% of these facilities are coded in the government system and 14% still need to be accredited.



WATER AND SANITATION

Achievements and impact

Water supply: During the first quarter of the year, water access was maintained at an average of 17 liters per person per day (lpd). WASH partners responded to emergencies in the Southwest, Northern, and West Nile regions. Water access averaged 12.4 liters per day per person (lpd) in the Southwest and 18 lpd in Northern settlements receiving new arrivals. This meets the emergency threshold of 7.5-15 lpd, although the Southwest experienced lower access due to limited water infrastructure and higher numbers of new arrivals compared to the Northern settlements.

On average, 40% of the water is pumped through renewable energy sources. Additionally, 370 water abstraction permits have been acquired for motorized systems. Furthermore, there are 10 water schemes under the management of utilities such as the National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) and Umbrella authorities. To ensure effective monitoring, 42 water resource monitoring stations have been installed and are regularly monitored.

Household latrine coverage: Sanitation coverage decreased from 66% to 64% on average due to the increased number of new arrivals outpacing the rate of household latrine construction. Despite this, the latrine-to-person ratio was maintained within the target of 1:50 through the construction of 330 emergency latrines. To promote personal hygiene and environmental sanitation among the newly arrived, WASH partners deployed community hygiene promoters (Village Health Teams-VHT) at a ratio of 648 persons per promoter, against a target of 1:500. The VHT approach is now fully implemented in all settlements after two years of trial in the Southwest. This is reducing the pressure on WASH and Health services by capacitating community-based structures to allow for a faster and more resource efficient response.

Transition: The WASH sector is working to ensure equitable and sustainable access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services for both refugees and host communities. Interventions focus on integrating services into national systems and using innovative approaches to promote self-reliance. This is being achieved through the implementation of the Water and Environment Sector Refugee Response Plan (WERRP). The approach prioritizes transitioning all services to national systems, such as district authorities, water utilities, and local communities. Progress has been made, with one settlement (Rwamwanja) now fully under the management of a national utility. However, there have been delays in revising the MoU with the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, as well as establishing a new MoU with the Northern Umbrella for Water and Sanitation.

Challenges and Gaps

- **Limited Funding:** The primary challenge is insufficient funding to maintain older systems in settlements that are not receiving new arrivals. Aging electromechanical equipment such as generators, pumps, and inverters have led to increased breakdowns, resulting in higher operational and maintenance costs for water systems.
- **Population Influx:** The influx of new arrivals (mainly from Sudan) in Kiryandongo settlement has put immense pressure on the aging water system. Consequently, the water supply in Kiryandongo settlement decreased from 17 lpd in January to less than 10 lpd at the end of March.



ENVIRONMENT AND ACCESS TO ENERGY

Achievements and impact

Seedling Distribution and Woodlot Establishment: Since 2019, UNHCR has partnered with the National Forestry Authority (NFA) to combat environmental degradation in refugee-hosting areas and to foster peaceful coexistence with host communities by mitigating competition for forest resources. By the end of Q1, the National Forestry Authority (NFA) had raised 2.45 million tree seedlings out of the 9.8 million targeted for 2024. These were prepared for distribution to beneficiaries for planting. The seedlings helped establish 205.4 hectares of woodlots, with 93.4% (192.4 ha) in West Nile settlements and the remainder in the host community. In the southwest, woodlot establishment was halted due to unstable rains. Some seedlings were also used to maintain 606 hectares of existing woodlots through gap filling, with 44.2% (268 ha) in West Nile, 33.2% (201.2 ha) in the Southwest, and 22.6% (137 ha) in the host community.

Clean cooking: In line with the Global Strategy for Sustainable Energy (2019-2025), and the Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability (2022-2025), UNHCR and its partners continued to facilitate access to clean, safe and affordable energy sources for cooking and lighting. As of March 2024, 5,802 (7.8%) out of the planned 75,000 households had received energy-efficient cookstoves. Among these, 65.8% (3,821 households) are South Sudanese, 10.7% (622 households) are Congolese, and 23.4% (1,359 households) are from the host community. Additionally, 287 heat retaining baskets were produced and distributed to beneficiaries in West Nile, increasing access to clean cooking solutions in the entire operation to 37.56%. The predominant type of household stove disseminated was the fixed Rocket Lorena model, constructed with the assistance of 1,226 locally trained artisans.

Furthermore, seven energy-saving institutional cookstoves were established in institutions to minimize wood consumption. As part of the Green Financing Facility initiative, solar systems were installed at the UNHCR offices in Adjumani-Pakelle Sub Office (252kW) and the Yumbe Field Office (120kW) to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, reducing carbon footprint. Although these systems are partially commissioned and able to provide daytime power without battery storage, nighttime power is still supplied by diesel generators.

Capacity building: Efforts included awareness creation sessions conducted for over 1000 participants (25% females and 75% males) from both host and refugee communities, on Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), an agroforestry practice focusing on the regeneration and management of existing vegetation, which helps restore degraded land and improve agricultural productivity while preserving biodiversity. In addition to emphasizing the significance of community feedback, the sessions highlighted the community's responsibility to promote sustainable natural resource utilization. Participants were also informed about the availability of free tree seedlings from nurseries operated by the National Forestry Authority (NFA) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Solarization of Infrastructure: In line with the Global Strategy for Sustainable Energy (2019-2025) and the Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability (2022-2025), UNHCR and its partners are dedicated to improving access to clean, safe, and affordable energy sources for cooking and lighting. UNHCR integrates solar energy to power critical infrastructure like health centers, water systems, and schools in refugee settlements, ensuring uninterrupted services and mitigating climate impact. Solarization reduces reliance on national grids, stabilizes energy supply, and addresses frequent power outages in refugee settlements. As part of these efforts, UNHCR installed solar systems at the Adjumani-Pakelle Sub Office (252kW) and Yumbe Field Office (120kW), supported by the Green Financing Facility (GFF). Initial commissioning took place in Quarter 1, with battery installation scheduled for Quarter 2 to enhance power reliability. Currently, the solar systems supply power during the day, while generators provide power at night until the batteries are installed.

Challenges and Gaps

- The March 2024 heat wave in East Africa delayed the onset of the first season rains in various regions of the country.



SHELTER, SETTLEMENT & NFI

Achievements and impact

Advocacy: UNHCR continued to advocate for implementation of the revised shelter strategy that considers more environmentally sustainable, culturally sensitive, and flexible designs, and the settlement planning guidelines following the master plan approach, which aims to improve site planning and contribute to land use optimization. UNHCR also continued to advocate for hands-on training, experience, and skills development for refugees in building and construction. Skilled refugees subsequently support both new arrivals and existing caseloads in establishing new shelters and upgrading existing household shelters using sustainable materials, thereby contributing to environmental protection.

Land allocation: Due to flexibility of the Uganda refugee policy, there is free movement to and from settlements by registered refugees. As such, UNHCR prioritized the verification of vacant lands in refugee settlements and created a vacant lands inventory to aid the settling of new caseloads.

Emergency Shelter: By the end of March 2024, 36,340 refugees and asylum seekers had been received in Uganda. As per UNHCR policy all new arrival households received a shelter support kit (including Plastic Sheeting, Ropes, Poles, Basic tools, and other NFIs like blankets, kitchen sets, and home hygiene items) upon settling in their allocated plots of land to enable them to establish shelter structures. New arrival vulnerable refugee households among these received semi-permanent shelter and cash support to support in their shelter construction. 1,690 plots (3.7% of the target) of land were demarcated for shelter and livelihood activities.

Challenges and Gaps

- Growing refugee numbers strain settlement and host community infrastructure (roads, schools, health centers), necessitating temporary solutions due to funding constraints and ultimately affecting the shelter needs of extremely vulnerable individuals. The influx of refugees further strains reception facilities and humanitarian funding, prompting UNHCR to seek increased investment in shelter and infrastructure to maintain a protective environment for especially new arrivals.
- The high demand for shelter persists, especially among vulnerable individuals in settlements. Unfortunately, scarcity of construction materials forces refugees to seek poles from host community lands or forests, triggering conflicts with local populations and authorities. Additionally, the shrinking availability of settlement land and rushed allocation processes further complicate efforts to provide suitable housing, prioritizing shelter plots over agricultural needs.
- Migration of skilled construction workers to neighboring countries or urban areas for better economic opportunities has created shortages in technical personnel for shelter construction and repairs within settlements, exacerbating the challenge of meeting escalating demand for housing in refugee communities.



LIVELIHOODS, RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION

Achievements and impact

Access to Land: In the first quarter, partners facilitated access to an additional 1,461 acres of arable land for both refugees and host populations and provided training in good agricultural practices and agricultural technologies for 23,081 individuals primarily focusing on planting food crops for the year's first season.

Training and Support: Training sessions were conducted on entrepreneurship, financial literacy, good agronomic practices, and group dynamics to enhance the capacity of 10,331 beneficiaries in these areas. 34 partners in Kampala were also trained to improve beneficiary data recording for better program design, targeting, and efficiency, aiming to reduce duplication. Partners assisted refugee and host community groups in accessing produce markets and formed 882 credit and savings groups. 710 households received emergency livelihoods support (agricultural inputs, productive assets, cash grants) to enable refugees sustain their lives and quickly rebuild their livelihoods.

Current livelihood projects: There are 41 partners (33 INGOs, 7 National NGOs, 01 Refugee Led Organization) implementing livelihoods projects in the refugee operation with a financial requirement of approximately US\$ 162M which is only 24% funded as at the end of the first quarter. There's a pressing need to amplify investments by development partners and private sector actors in refugee self-reliance, in order to reduce aid dependency in these times of declining humanitarian funding.

Vocational Training: On March 4th, eight trainees from the third cohort of the Toyota automotive training program successfully graduated. Alongside technical skills, participants also underwent life skills training in communication, innovation, and entrepreneurship to enhance their readiness for the job market. The UNHCR Team has actively maintained engagement with project partners, recently meeting with CFAO Directors on March 4th to provide a comprehensive briefing on the status of the Toyota Project, covering its inception to the present day.

Challenges and Gaps

- Challenges persist despite efforts to bolster refugee self-reliance, with food affecting approximately 68% of refugee households. This stems from climate change-induced crop failures and limited access to arable land.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

In 2024, UNHCR plays a central role in the Refugee Coordination Model, collaborating with a diverse array of partners, including NGOs, government entities, UN agencies, donors, the private sector, civil society, and refugee-led organizations. The Representation signed 46 partnership agreements (PAs) with various entities, including 27 government bodies, 15 international NGOs, 02 local NGOs, and 02 UN agencies. Additionally, there are 20 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs) receiving funding from UNHCR through the Regional Youth Peacebuilding Programme (RYPP) of the South Sudan Solutions Initiative.

Three monthly Refugee Humanitarian Partners Group (RHPG) meetings and one quarterly ambassadors' meeting were held in the first quarter. These provided platforms for strategic discussions, addressing operational issues and underlining funding priorities. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group, co-chaired by UNHCR, OPM, and the Ministry of Local Government, has conducted three national coordination meetings in 2024.

For more information on partners involved in the refugee response please see the [Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan Detailed planning 2024-2025](#).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION: UNHCR is grateful for the donors' support to the operation.

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

United States of America 15.4 million | European Union 13 million | Netherlands 4.4 million |
Spotlight 3 million | Japan 2.4 million | Sweden 1 million | Republic of Korea 1 million
IKEA Foundation | IGAD | Private donor in Canada | Germany | Other private donors.

OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

United States of America 8.6 million | Norway 2.8 million

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Sweden 90.6 million | Norway 58.9 million | Netherlands 36.3 million | Denmark 35.6 million |
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 28.5 million | Switzerland 19.2 million |
Republic of Korea 17.9 million | Ireland 13.6 million | Belgium 11 million | Australia 10.7 million

Algeria | Angola | Armenia | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Luxembourg | Malta | Mexico |
Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand |
Türkiye | Private donors

The Refugee Response in Uganda is coordinated jointly by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

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