

Annual Results Report

2023

Republic of Türkiye

Acknowledgements

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- 4.1 – Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

Section 1: Context and Overview

1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

The 6 February 2023 earthquakes in Southeast Türkiye affected a region hosting more than 14 million people, including 1.75 million refugees. UNHCR declared a Level 2 Emergency on 9 February, and together with UN agencies issued a Flash Appeal to mobilize resources and support government response efforts. Utilizing its emergency capacity, UNHCR provided the Government of Türkiye with 2.9 million core relief items from its emergency stockpile including tents, blankets, sleeping bags, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, sanitary items and clothing. The level of destruction in the impacted region significantly affected survivors' access to essential and social services. As a result, the earthquakes affected UNHCR's 2023 operational priorities in Türkiye and further compounded the challenging socio-economic landscape in Türkiye, marked by high levels of inflation and unemployment. Vulnerable groups and individuals were amongst those who were hit the hardest and faced slower recovery processes.

According to the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) website, Türkiye hosted 3,206,700 Syrians under temporary protection (TP) by the end of 2023, marking a 9 per cent decrease compared to 2022. Among them, 52 per cent were male and 48 female, with an estimated 48 per cent children, most of whom were born or raised in Türkiye. Türkiye also hosted an estimated 289,500 international protection (IP) applicants and status holders with an estimated 45 per cent female and 42 per cent children. The main IP applicants were from Afghanistan (47 per cent) and Iraq (43 per cent).

Several new policies implemented in 2023 significantly influenced the protection environment. Following the earthquakes, the Government of Türkiye authorized temporary exits to Syria and allowed the refugee population to move to safer areas in Türkiye. Most refugees who moved within Türkiye post-earthquake were families. Approximately 93 per cent of the 73,000 individuals who utilized this opportunity reportedly returned to Türkiye before the year-end deadline. Additionally, stronger measures to address irregular migration were introduced which resulted in an increase in interceptions, apprehensions and deportations. Mobile migration points initiated by PMM in Istanbul in July were expanded in October to 30 metropolitan areas. These were set up to identify foreigners staying in Türkiye irregularly, resulting in the inactivation of foreigner's ID cards for some and referral to removal centres for deportation procedures for others. These stronger migration management measures increased the need for protection and legal services, as the latter is contingent on the availability of legal bar associates or private lawyers.

1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

People in need of international protection and the host community benefit from coordinated support from a wide range of actors.

People in need of international protection have access to quality, fair and efficient procedures in line with international law and the national legal framework.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
1.1 Proportion of people seeking international protection who are able to access asylum procedures	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	92.46%	96.01%
1.2 Proportion of people who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0.00%	0.00%

Türkiye continues to provide a favourable protection environment for one of the largest refugee populations globally, a commendable feat given the added pressure on public services and the country's commitment to curb onward movements. Türkiye continues to be impacted by mixed movements including irregular migrants and has registered 19,000 IP applicants and a considerable number of Syrians in 2023, including newborn babies. Since 2021, Afghans in Türkiye have increasingly approached the authorities for international protection following the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, and an eroding refugee protection environment in other countries.

In 2023, PMM and the Provincial Directorates for Migration Management (PDMMs) improved their registration and documentation of IP and TP applicants as well as status holders. With the operational support of UNHCR, PMM registered 85 per cent of the total IP applicants through 63 PDMMs (out of 81) leading to a 71 per cent reduction of IP registration backlog. Prompt renewal of ID documents and travel permits were achieved for those affected by the earthquakes. PDMMs conducted 2.2 million data updates, including their residential address to avoid the inactivation of ID cards. Through the mechanism established with PMM, UNHCR followed up on individual cases which had registration obstacles and succeeded in finding solutions for 64 per cent of them. Furthermore, PDMMs' protection desks which are present in 52 provinces, are tasked with identifying people with specific needs during registration, conducting protection assessments, referrals and following-up with other state service providers in view of their vulnerabilities. They include interviewers, social workers and interpreters. In 2023, the protection desks continued to identify people with specific needs and refer them to specialized government services.

The policy requiring permits to travel within the country was not changed in 2023; however, PMM showed flexibility in providing travel permits to 143,000 refugees, which UNHCR is aware of, who were affected by the earthquakes and decided to relocate to other regions of the country. PMM continued to extend the travel permits of refugees affected by the earthquake.

To enhance applicants' access to legal remedies, such as appeal processes against rejection decisions, deportation and other administrative decisions or civil matters including of custody, divorce, citizenship, UNHCR supported bar associations in 45 provinces which provided legal aid to 5,929 refugees. UNHCR also provided trainings for 6,772 lawyers and justice sector actors in cooperation with the Union of Bar Associations and the Justice Academy of Türkiye for consistent implementation of legislation and prevention of refoulement.

2. Impact Area: Realizing Rights in Safe Environments

People in need of international protection have access to essential and social services.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
2.2 Proportion of people residing in physically safe and secure settlements with access to basic facilities	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	72.90%	72.90%
2.3 Proportion of people with access to health services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	96.37%	96.37%

The 6 February 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye, impacted a region hosting more than 14 million people in 11 provinces, 1.75 million of whom were refugees, more than half the refugee population in the country. The earthquakes led to over 53,000 deaths of which at least 7,700 were foreign nationals. Many surviving refugees lost their homes, employment and livelihoods. The earthquakes further compounded the already-dire situation many refugees faced in Türkiye due to economic conditions and for many, over a decade of displacement. The level of destruction also significantly affected refugees' access to essential and social services since the physical premises of key service providers were damaged or inoperable. Those which remained functional were heavily overstretched due to a massive increase in demand. To facilitate access to services, PMM issued temporary travel permits for IP and TP beneficiaries impacted by the earthquakes who decided to move to other provinces.

Following the earthquakes, the international community in Türkiye, including UN agencies, international NGOs, and embassies, increased its support to the Government of Türkiye and to existing humanitarian partners to address immediate humanitarian needs. This assistance took many modalities including search and rescue, cash-based assistance and core relief items. UNHCR provided the Government of Türkiye with over 2.9 million core relief items and increased financial support to new and previously engaged partners. Assistance included essential items such as blankets, sleeping bags, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, sanitary items and clothing which were readily available in UNHCR's emergency stockpile. This immediate life-saving humanitarian response, while essential, could not fully address the aftermath of the earthquakes which require prolonged recovery efforts.

The Social Safety Net Programme (SSN) funded by the European Union remains the most important action to ensure that 1.5 million refugees can meet their basic needs. In August 2023, the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) took over the implementation of the programme from IFRC, with the Turkish Red Crescent as co-implementer. The programme will continue to serve millions of vulnerable refugees in Türkiye with the financial support of the European Union under the ministry's collective SSN.

Despite the generous SSN programme, refugees including those outside the earthquake zone are becoming increasingly vulnerable. The humanitarian community including UNHCR has maintained a network of partners to identify and provide complementary support for survivors of gender-based violence, children at risk including unaccompanied and separated children as well as people with physical and legal concerns. The UNHCR Counselling Line received 779,906 calls in 2023, an increase of 18 per cent compared to the total number of calls received in 2022 (661,275). UNHCR identified the need for poverty assessments and socio-economic data to develop a unified and coordinated response which effectively targets the most vulnerable refugees.

Syrians under temporary protection continue to enjoy free access to basic state health services, while international protection applicants and status holders are covered under the national General Health Insurance (GHI) for one year from the date of their registration. After one-year, IP applicants or status holders are responsible for their own medical expenses, unless they have documented serious medical conditions or specific needs, which mandates the reactivation of the GHI. The inactivation of the GHI continued to be a major challenge for vulnerable forcibly displaced people. To mitigate emergency needs, UNHCR and partners provided in-kind assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees, including medical, mental health and medication support through contracted clinics and pharmacies.

The protection environment in Türkiye is increasingly impacted by both hosting fatigue and donor fatigue. Increasing economic pressures including high inflation are significant stress factors for both the host community and refugee population. Leading up to the May 2023 national elections in Türkiye, there was a noticeable increase in the politicization of refugees and irregular migrants. UNHCR observed a rise in incidents of discrimination and harassment. Additionally, the government implemented stricter measures to manage irregular migration, resulting in increased detentions and forced returns of migrants and individuals

potentially in need of international protection. UNHCR and its partners received additional requests for legal assistance and some refugees reported they were limiting their movements out of fear of being arrested and detained.

3. Impact Area: Empowering Communities and Achieving Gender Equality

Refugees participate in social and economic life harmoniously with the host community.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
3.1 Proportion of people who have the right to decent work	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%
3.3 Proportion of people feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	78.72%	78.72%

In 2022, Türkiye's economy began rebounding after the COVID lockdowns, but high inflation and currency depreciation exacerbated the economic challenges created during the pandemic. This uneven recovery pushed an estimated 1.5 million people into poverty, with the most vulnerable, including refugees, bearing the brunt of unemployment and income loss. The lack of economic indicators, specifically in relation to the refugees' economic situation and income, hampers a proper analysis and coordinated approach to poverty reduction.

The estimated financial cost of the earthquakes on Türkiye (more than USD 100 billion or 9 per cent GDP) worsened existing vulnerabilities, disrupting socio-economic prospects and increased the point of frictions between refugees and host communities. The national Türkiye Earthquakes Recovery and reconstruction Assessment (TERRA) led by UNDP and the World Bank, including UNHCR support, advocated for a holistic approach to refugee inclusion in recovery.

Barriers to refugee employment have persisted, such as increased work permit fees, issuance delays, and employer reluctance, amidst increased labour costs, affecting both formal and informal job markets. Inter-agency efforts progressed on refugee employment transitions, with modifications to some of the SSN-linked employment barriers. However, loss of livelihoods, job competition, misinformation and language barriers strained community relations necessitating sustained support and investment in public service providers to mitigate competition and counter misperceptions.

Despite challenges, UNHCR and partners contributed significantly by raising awareness on work permit procedures through dissemination sessions done jointly with the Directorate General of International Labour Force (DGoILF) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) and provided job counselling to over 14,400 individuals across nine provinces in collaboration with İŞKUR, the Turkish Employment Agency. Additionally, UNHCR and partners supported over 1,500 refugees to enter the labour market and enhanced the capacity of 13 cooperatives involving over 100 refugees and over 250 host community members, aiming to bolster self-reliance and resilience among refugee and host communities.

Türkiye continued to achieve commendable success in the education sector, reflecting the robust humanitarian-development nexus and strong partnerships between the Government of Türkiye, the EU, World Bank, UNICEF, UNHCR and other key stakeholders. Of the over one million Syrian school-aged children in the country, Turkish public schools, grades 1 - 12, provided education, with an enrolment figure of over 800,000 Syrian children. This highlights Türkiye's significant efforts to ensure access to education for all school-aged Syrian children.

The success was particularly evident in primary and lower secondary education, where enrolment rates were over 90 per cent, about a 15 per cent increase compared to previous year, which was 79 per cent. This achievement is reflected in the high enrolment rates across different educational levels despite the earthquakes. From interviews with various students, it appears that the lower upper-secondary enrolment rate most likely reflects the economic vulnerability of refugees in Türkiye, where adolescents are often expected to financially contribute to family expenditures. Within the earthquake zone, access to education has worsened in 2023 due to the destruction of schools and relocation of the population.

Through strategic partnerships and initiatives, Türkiye succeeded in enrolling over 58,000 Syrian youth in higher education, demonstrating a commitment to fostering opportunities for refugee education and socio-economic integration. This represents an enrolment rate of approximately 14 per cent, twice the global average of 7 per cent for refugee enrolment in higher education and only one per cent short of the 15by30 Roadmap target for access to higher education by refugees. Among these students, 56 per cent are male, and 44 per cent are female, reflecting Türkiye's commitment to gender equality in education.

4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

Refugees have opportunities for suitable and sustainable solutions based on their individual needs.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
4.1 Number of refugees who voluntarily return in safety and dignity to their country of origin	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	33,953	19,865
4.2a Number of people who departed on resettlement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	10,075	13,924
4.2b Number of people who departed through complementary pathways	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	7	20
4.3b Number of refugees for whom residency status is granted or confirmed	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	211,000	238,055

While the legal environment in Türkiye remains favourable in terms of access to international protection, refugees see limited opportunities for finding a permanent home in Türkiye. PMM is yet to finalize its Harmonization Strategy Paper and National Action Plan for the 2023-2028 period which would provide the framework for actions to foster social cohesion with the engagement of all relevant stakeholders.

The conflict in Syria persists as the largest displacement crisis globally, with over 12 million Syrians forcibly displaced within the region. Among them, 6.8 million are internally displaced, while 5.2 million are registered as refugees in neighbouring countries, with Türkiye hosting 3.1 million. Due to the ongoing conflict and the impact of earthquakes in the northwestern part of Syria, voluntary returns remain an uncommon choice for most Syrian refugees. However, 73,000 individuals, 93 per cent of whom returned prior to end-of-year, benefitted from temporary exits authorized by the Government of Türkiye after the February 2023 earthquakes.

UNHCR's Türkiye operation continued to benefit from the largest resettlement quotas within the organization. In 2023, resettlement quotas, submissions and accelerated resettlement departures increased, providing solutions for the most vulnerable earthquake-affected refugees. Nevertheless, the scale of resettlement remained minimal at 0.3 per cent compared to the overall needs.

1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

National socio-economic challenges such as high inflation and rising poverty levels are contributing to host fatigue, resulting in a gradual increase in anti-refugee sentiments, particularly towards Syrians. These sentiments, prevalent in both the political landscape and social media, have intensified as refugee issues were politicized during electoral campaigns. In this context, preserving a largely favourable legal framework which ensures access to registration, social/public services, and the right to work has become increasingly crucial for fostering social cohesion and harmonization efforts requiring continued donor support. However, reduced level of funding to the 3RP posed challenges to UNHCR and partners in providing adequate support in addressing these complexities.

Although UNHCR and partners provide technical and operational support to the Presidency of Migration Management and Ministry of Family and Social Services, who serve as the primary providers of services to

individuals in need of international protection, they face significant strain meeting the protection and assistance needs of over three million refugees. Additionally, the Government grapples with the heavy burden of high inflation and the aftermath of the earthquakes, estimated by the World Bank to have cost Türkiye approximately USD 100 billion, or 9 per cent of its GDP. Similarly, the capacity of UNHCR and its partners to provide legal aid and reach out to refugees and asylum seekers fell short of the increasing needs, particularly given the rise in instances of detention and deportation due to measures aimed at addressing irregular migration.

In Türkiye, humanitarian and development actors require improved access to data for program design, progress measurement, and comprehensive reporting to donors regarding achievements, gaps and lessons learned. Access to quality data is increasingly crucial, especially in a context of donor fatigue and new emergency needs in other parts of the world.

Voluntary return has not been a viable solution for most refugees, owing to the ongoing conflict in Syria and the devastating impact in the northwestern part of Syria of the February 2023 earthquakes. Only a small scale of spontaneous voluntary returns to Syria took place in 2023. Resettlement continues to be an important durable solution for people with serious protection needs in Türkiye. The Government of Türkiye has not yet finalized its new harmonization strategy which will outline its social cohesion approach for foreigners in the country.

1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

When framing UNHCR's interventions in Türkiye, it is crucial to recognize the primary actors supporting refugees: the Government of Türkiye and key donors providing bilateral and multilateral funding, mainly directed toward the State's public systems and services that have been stretched due to the increase in demand in areas where refugees reside, or development projects related to refugees targeting key refugee hosting areas. The Presidency of Migration Management and the Ministry of Family and Social Services serve as the primary providers of services to individuals in need of international protection and have a leading role in maintaining protection space despite the significant difficulties they face in meeting the protection needs of refugees in the country. The Emergency Social Safety Net Programme (ESSN) funded by the European Union remains the most important action to ensure that 1.5 million vulnerable refugees can meet their basic needs.

Through its co-leadership of the 3RP with UNDP, and leadership of the Protection and Basic Needs sectors, UNHCR coordinates humanitarian support to the Government of Türkiye's refugee response. The coordination efforts involve approximately 290 distinct partners, comprising national and international NGOs, municipalities, government agencies, civil society organizations, and UN agencies. UNHCR ensures alignment with Türkiye's policies while embedding protection principles into service standardization and operational methodologies. Since its introduction in Türkiye in 2015, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) has contributed to the mobilization of approximately USD 6 Billion in Türkiye to date. Despite the persistently high needs, the funding for the refugee response in Türkiye has steadily decreased. By the fourth quarter of 2023, the 34 3RP partners had only received USD 346 million against the total request of USD 896 million, amounting to only 39 per cent. Funding in comparison, during the same period in 2022, the 3RP partners had received USD 446 million, i.e. 38 per cent of the total request. This reduction in funding over time is predicted to continue into 2024 and beyond and has significant implications for the 3RP partners' ability to support the government and respond to the needs of the refugee communities. As with UNHCR programming, all sectors and partners will be looking at prioritization exercises; however, significant unmet needs are anticipated over the next year and those to come highlighting the needs to improve coordination with development actors.

In 2023, the 3RP partners assisted 2.8 million individuals by 65 partners, including 1.9 million under regular programming and an additional 918,000 people in response to needs arising due to the earthquakes. Of those assisted by the 3RP partners, 1.96 million beneficiaries were Syrians, 977,000 were Turkish citizens (of which 361,000 host community members were supported by the 3RP partners due to their needs resulting from the earthquakes), and 170,000 were from other nationalities.

To support the government-led response, the UN launched a Flash Appeal in February 2023 as part of a humanitarian system-wide scale-up for the earthquake response in Türkiye seeking USD 1 billion to support

life-saving interventions across a range of sectors. In addition, a humanitarian coordination structure managed by OCHA was quickly established to coordinate UN and NGO partners contributing to the earthquake response, building on 3RP coordination bodies, and significantly enhancing inter-agency coordination in the affected region given the scale and scope of needs created by the earthquakes.

Drawing on existing capacity and platforms, UNHCR supported the UN-led humanitarian response to the earthquake from the onset. In August 2023, the Area Based Coordination (ABC) structure was established as a coordination mechanism for the earthquake response, with UNHCR assuming the role of co-chair along with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office and IOM. UNHCR also co-chairs the Information Management Working Group and the Earthquake Solutions and Mobility Analysis Team (ESMAT), which produced knowledge management products and analysis, and led prioritization activities for the earthquake response. These modified coordination structures were successful in creating additional space for civil society actors to engage with local governmental officials, which had protection outcomes for refugees living in earthquake-affected areas and increased awareness and collaboration on refugee issues.

Additionally, UNHCR co-chairs with IOM the UNSDCF 2021-25 Results Group on Migration, International Protection and Harmonization and contributes to other results groups. The linkages with partners across the results groups help to ensure that refugees are included in diverse programming, beyond a humanitarian response and increase awareness of the need to ensure that refugees are also mainstreamed into development programming.

As first responders to the impact of population increase on services, local authorities including municipalities and provincial administrations play a vital role in hosting refugees, complementing the essential services provided by line ministries and provincial directorates. Local public and private actors also help to identify and tackle social barriers through inclusive policies and service provision. Engagement with municipalities and local authorities was a priority for UNHCR in 2023 and significant advocacy and collaboration took place in the field which resulted in improved delivery of services to refugees and access to skills development opportunities at the local level.

UNHCR sought private-sector partnerships to mobilize resources to support refugee programs and increase access to livelihood opportunities. The private sector provided significant in-kind contributions after the earthquakes. In December, UNHCR convened protection dialogues bringing together diverse stakeholders which showcased their initiatives, shared insights and discussed challenges to the economic inclusion of refugees and how to address them.

To advance the vision of the Grand Bargain, and with the backing of the 3RP, UNHCR and UNDP collaborated under the auspices of the Localization Advocacy Group (LAG) and the Refugee Council of Türkiye (TMK) to establish the National Reference Group in early 2023. The National Reference Group aims to champion aid localization in Türkiye, acknowledging the capabilities of local actors and addressing barriers to their full engagement, while seeking the support of donors, the UN, and the Government of Türkiye. Since 2023, all of UNHCR's implementing partners have been local organizations. Following the earthquakes, as the partnership expanded to address the emergency, some international partners received support until the year's end. In 2024, UNHCR is exclusively supporting local organizations.

Section 2: Results

2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

1. Outcome Area: Access to Territory, Reg. and Documentation

People seeking international protection are registered and documented in an efficient, timely, and quality manner.

People seeking international protection have access to territory and asylum procedures and are not forcibly returned.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
1.1 Proportion of refugees and asylum seekers registered on an individual basis	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	99.93%	100.00%	99.98%
1.2 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	98.89%	100.00%	99.98%
1.3 Proportion of people with legally recognized identity documents or credentials	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	99.67%	100.00%	99.98%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR supported PMM and PDMMs for effective registration and documentation of international and temporary protection applicants as well as status holders. As a result, 85 per cent of all IP applicants registered in 2023 were registered by 63 PDMMs operationally supported by UNHCR. The partnership between UNHCR and PMM resulted in a 71 per cent reduction of IP registration backlog. Prompt renewal of ID documents was achieved for those affected by the earthquakes. With the verification exercises carried out by PMM, refugees' rapid access to data update procedures was made possible through UNHCR's support, whereby 63 PDMMs conducted 1,601,146 data update interviews and address registry procedures. Through the mechanism established with PMM, UNHCR followed up on individual cases which had registration obstacles and succeeded in finding solutions for 64 per cent of them. UNHCR's support to the protection desks enabled early identification of people with specific needs, their prioritized processing and identification of solutions. UNHCR delivered capacity building activities targeting 988 PMM and PDMM personnel including civil servants and project personnel throughout 2023 who were directly involved in data update, address registry procedures and depending on their responsibilities, in identification of people with specific needs and making referrals. Diverse training sessions increased the technical knowledge of personnel and their comprehension of the legal framework, an aspect to enhance compliance with the law in implementation. The impact of the trainings led to improvements in quality and efficiency of the process as observed from UNHCR's field missions. Most importantly, these activities underscored the significance of multi-stakeholder cooperation in addressing challenges in access to asylum and documentation.

UNHCR engaged in technical and licensing support which enhanced the capacity of PMM's migration registration system. This streamlines the registration and documentation processes for individuals seeking international protection by ensuring more efficient and accurate documentation of asylum-seekers.

UNHCR advocated with PMM on individual cases which held a refoulement risk and advocated for interventions at the central level regarding local practices which were in conflict with the legislation. UNHCR also organized trainings for lawyers with a focus on deportation and administrative detention practices and supported legal aid applications for individual applications to the Constitutional Court. As a result, a judgment ruling was delivered with regards to a violation in a case involving the forced return of a Syrian national. UNHCR is PMM's only partner providing support to PMM and PDMMs in the registration field.

2. Outcome Area: Status Determination

International protection (IP) applicants receive quality refugee status determination decisions after going through fair and efficient asylum procedures with integrity.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
2.2 Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to legal representation	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	89.38%	94.00%	87.84%
2.3 Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to an effective appeal mechanism after first instance rejection of their claim	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR supported PMM's improving the technical know-how and quality of national refugee-status determination (RSD) procedures. The Quality Assurance Board, composed of UNHCR and PMM technical personnel, convened regularly to ensure that the waiting periods between interview and decisions are shortened and to reduce the backlog which had accumulated while maintaining the quality and fairness of RSD procedures.

In 2023, UNHCR and PMM completed 100 desk reviews of the interviews and legal assessments delivered by PDMMs and produced reports containing assessments and recommendations, followed by 13 joint on-the-job visits for analysis of adjudication by PDMMs. The desk-based reviews and field missions helped identify gaps and challenges in the processes for which UNHCR had submitted its findings on good practices and on overall recommendations for improvement of the national RSD procedures. PMM has issued guidance to address the gaps identified.

UNHCR carried out capacity-development activities reaching out to 517 PMM and PDMM personnel through tailored trainings according to needs. UNHCR also organized two regional workshops and training of trainers jointly with PMM to create a pool of trainers and mobile team members to support case processing and provide capacity development support. Trained staff formed expert groups in three mobile team missions, supported by UNHCR, where 136 cases were processed. The on-the-job visits and a second round of desk reviews demonstrated increased quality in interviews and legal assessments drafted by PDMM staff who had attended the training events.

Findings of the monitoring visits were triangulated with the information obtained through regular meetings with NGOs active in the field and the findings were translated into advocacy points. UNHCR also regularly followed recent developments and jurisdiction relating to RSD and shared compilations with PMM, with a view to advocate for procedural safeguards and the international protection needs of certain profiles. This information informed the technical discussions. UNHCR translated and shared updated guidelines and positions, as well as 14 country of origin information reports, with PMM for quality adjudication.

UNHCR continued efforts to establish a remote interviewing platform for PMM to facilitate remote interviewing through international protection bureaus (decision centres) in line with international standards, ensuring the sustainability of the platform. The platform will be used to support interviews, will include an interpreter pool, and will enable PMM to attend the interviews conducted by PDMMs for quality check. The platform will reduce the waiting period of cases in the field pending interviews with PDMMs.

3. Outcome Area: Protection Policy and Law

The legal framework is in line with international principles and implemented consistently and in its entirety by the national authorities.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

The Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) continued to be the cornerstone of the legislation regulating asylum procedures as well as rights and obligations of people seeking international protection in Türkiye. The LFIP also contains provisions on statelessness-related procedures including procedures regulating the rights of stateless people in line with international standards on statelessness. Stateless persons are not subjected to reciprocity in the procedures and are protected against refoulement. The definition of stateless person in the Law on FIP is yet to be aligned with the 1954 Convention. Türkiye has not yet acceded to 1961 Convention. The LFIP is a comprehensive legal instrument in compliance with international refugee law and non-refoulement is the founding principle of the LFIP along with procedural safeguards enshrined by the Law. Secondary legislation, such as the Temporary Protection Regulation, continues to be in effect for Syrian nationals seeking international protection in Türkiye. UNHCR was in regular contact with PMM to assess legislative changes and provided recommendations on a more favourable interpretation of the provisions. UNHCR provided regular feedback on implementation-related findings to ensure consistency by practitioners and to prevent arbitrariness. UNHCR's inputs and monitoring findings assisted PMM in providing relevant guidance to field officials on the interpretation and implementation of aspects of the legislation including a re-activation of registration records once people adhered to the obligations. In 2023, no amendments to legislative documents were introduced.

Despite the earthquakes and their impact on PMM and PDMs, UNHCR provided technical expertise on the principles enshrined in the international conventions on statelessness, statelessness determination procedures and citizenship-related aspects. UNHCR shared regular updates with PMM to keep it up to date with international developments.

4. Outcome Area: Gender-based Violence

Refugees live in safety from gender-based violence (GBV), and those at risk and survivors have access to specialized services.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
4.1 Proportion of people who know where to access available GBV services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	80.99%	84.00%	76.96%
4.2 Proportion of people who do not accept violence against women	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	83.07%	93.00%	84.42%
4.3 Proportion of survivors who are satisfied with GBV case management services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	54.28%	71.00%	61.16%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR and partner NGOs assessed 7,000 survivors of gender-based violence during 2023. Along with previously identified refugees in need, around 10,000 individuals received relevant services. Throughout 2023, around 427 individuals exposed to gender-based violence were referred for UNHCR's cash for protection programs. In 2023, UNHCR conducted focus group discussions with recipients of cash-for-protection survivors of gender-based violence to gather qualitative data on the cash program, its effectiveness, and ideas for improvement. The focus-group discussion participants consistently emphasized the instrumental role of the cash assistance in meeting their basic needs, such as food, rent, bills, medication, and educational expenses for themselves and their children. Almost all participants in each session emphasized how this assistance significantly improved their lives and catalysed their empowerment, with some opening small businesses, enrolling in courses, all while emphasizing the positive mental health impact more financial independence provides. Additionally, 1,001 survivors of gender-based violence received in-kind assistance such as limited accommodation, medical, transportation support. Trainings were provided to roughly 1,000 personnel of UNHCR direct and operational partners covering key concepts and principles of prevention of gender-based violence and response as well as a session on

prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

As part of the response to the earthquakes, the national gender-based violence sub-working group coordination team, chaired by UNFPA and UNHCR prepared a referral pathways tool for gender-based violence and trafficking in people, to facilitate timely and lifesaving referrals for survivors of gender-based violence.

In 2023, UNHCR completed implementing activities under the gender-based violence safety audit within the scope of the gender-based violence assessment which evaluates safety perceptions within forcibly displaced and stateless people, their knowledge of available gender-based violence services, and their views on their effectiveness. To assess the proportion of individuals aware of where to access gender-based violence services, questions were asked regarding familiarity with services related to health, psychosocial support (PSS), security and legal assistance. Among the 2,939 participants of the gender-based violence safety audit survey, the highest positive response was related to safety and security, with 2,262 individuals (76 per cent) indicating awareness.

To assess the satisfaction levels of forcibly displaced and stateless people with gender-based violence case management services, UNHCR conducted a gender-based violence feedback survey as a data collection mechanism. The survey was designed to ensure accountability to refugees, with a modality that allowed refugees to fill it out online directly. Out of 327 respondents to the question about whether the staff of partner NGOs had assisted them with their GBV-related problems, 200 participants provided a positive response (61 per cent). Additionally, 281 respondents indicated that they would recommend the organization to a friend seeking help for gender-based violence (86 per cent). These survey outcomes will guide UNHCR in strengthening GBV case management services in collaboration with partner NGOs.

The Government of Türkiye has undertaken numerous measures to tackle gender-based violence, such as enacting legislative reforms and implementing its ongoing fourth action plan of Combating Violence Against Women (2021-2025), which is an inter-ministerial initiative emphasizing zero tolerance towards violence against women. This plan outlines five key goals aimed at addressing GBV: improving access to justice and legislation, enhancing policy and coordination, strengthening protective and preventive services, increasing social awareness and sensitivity in the fight against violence, and collecting systematic, reliable, and comparable data. The five-year action plan continued to be implemented in 2023 through UNHCR's annual activity plan, which included actions focused on supporting refugees at risk of or survivors of violence.

UN agencies including UNHCR, UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF support government counterparts, including the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Family and Social Services, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and other state counterparts, in addressing gender-based violence within this framework. UNHCR continued to contribute to this outcome area through its support to MoFSS' Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres, which supported more than 13,000 refugee women and their children, and Women's Guesthouses, which housed more than 1,300 refugee women and accompanying children. UNHCR cooperated with UNICEF, UN Women, and UNFPA in support of MoFSS, and worked closely with UN agencies under the UNSDCF Results Group 2 on the Empowerment of Women and Girls through joint actions on women empowerment and gender equality. During the year, UNHCR contributed to the preparations of the Women Empowerment Strategy Document and Action Plan (2024-2028) along with other UN agencies.

5. Outcome Area: Child Protection

Refugee children are protected and those at risk have access to specialized and child-friendly services.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
5.1 Proportion of children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	50.34%	54.00%	68.67%
5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	6.97%	6.19%	6.97%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2023 UNHCR and its partner NGOs continued to take protection actions regarding child at risk and cases of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). UNHCR engaged with governmental stakeholders at the provincial and central level to advocate for the protection of at-risk children forced to flee as well as UASC. UNHCR continued its role as the co-coordinator of the national and regional child protection sub-working groups together with UNICEF, while also working closely with UN agencies under RG1 on Social Inclusion under UNSDCF covering joined up actions related to child protection.

UNHCR and its child protection partners continued its efforts to strengthen child protection responses and improve access to rights and services for children forced to flee by engaging with partners under the protection sector, including in the earthquake affected provinces, specifically linked with increased medical and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) needs, including in the field of substance use and increased disability among children, as well as linked with increased child protection risks, such as family separation, child labour and child marriages. Throughout the year, UNHCR and its child protection partners assessed close to 149,000 children for risks; out of which 90,000 were identified to be at risk while 60,000 were referred to specialized services. Approximately 3,300 child protection personnel were provided training by UNHCR and its 3RP partners on child protection related topics. Over 13,000 children joined in community-based child protection programmes and more than 36,000 children received PSS support through individual and community level PSS activities. The number of child protection activities increased in 2023, compared to 2022, due to the dire needs on the ground following the earthquakes, leading to increases focused on case management and PSS activities. Building on the national child safeguarding guidance document and the national child protection risk prioritization matrix developed by and endorsed at the national child protection sub-working group in 2022, existing child protection tools and guidance materials were adapted to the earthquake context by the child protection sub-sector operating in the 11 provinces impacted by the earthquakes with the support of UNHCR.

In 2023, Türkiye issued its inaugural Child Rights Strategy Document and Action Plan 2023-2028 which UNHCR contributed to, along with UNICEF and other UN agencies. The priority issues under the plan are child rights and participation; child friendly justice; protection and support services for family and child; alternative care services; strategies for children affected by disasters, crises and emergencies; access to information technology and safe internet use. The plan provides the strategic direction for Türkiye in child protection, including for refugee children's protection. UNHCR attended the first Child Council Meeting and Central Coordination Sub-Commission Meeting on Child Protection both convened by MoFSS, bringing up the specific needs of refugee children, including UASC to the agenda, complementing the works of UNICEF, other UN agencies and relevant public institutions.

During the year, through its support to MoFSS, UNHCR supported an average of 800 forcibly displaced foreign children monthly under state protection receiving social services, care and psychosocial support, covering a portion of the overall number of refugee children supported by the national child protection system, including those refugee children under foster care. UNHCR continued to work closely with UNICEF in the field of child protection, under 3RP and in relation to supports to MoFSS focused on strengthening national child protection system.

Furthermore, over 300 Ukrainian children from residential care institutions were hosted in hotels in Antalya. UNHCR worked with MoFSS, UNICEF in coordination with IFRC to support them.

UNHCR also convened the inter-agency Best Interest Determination (BID) panel with the participation of UNICEF and NGO partners, through which more than 50 BIDs were decided in 2023.

6. Outcome Area: Safety and Access to Justice

People seeking international protection are aware of and benefit from legal assistance and remedies.

Refugees with specific needs have access to specialized protection services without obstacles.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2023, UNHCR worked with 45 bar associations in providing training and supporting the provision of legal aid which benefitted 5,929 people. This constituted an increase from 4,449 people who received legal aid in 2022. Only lawyers could represent people at the courts and UNHCR's support to bar associations enabled refugees to access legal aid and have legal representation. UNHCR partners and legal clinics throughout the country provided legal assistance through counselling and support for petitions reaching 8,117 people. The availability of legal services to those detained or at risk of refoulement was particularly meaningful and UNHCR supported bar associations in the provision of legal aid to 1,372 people in administrative detention to appeal against detention orders. In addition to this, UNHCR support enabled access to legal representation and legal assistance to appeal deportation decisions in 807 cases. Six legal clinics, established by UNHCR and the Union of Turkish Bar Associations, provided counselling and petition support to 675 international and temporary protection applicants at removal centres. In addition to assisting individuals' access to legal services, UNHCR also provided training to 6,772 lawyers, judges, prosecutors and justice sector actors who are directly engaged in administrative detention and deportation procedures. There were positive decisions delivered by the Constitutional Court on non-refoulement and admission cases with UNHCR's involvement. In view of the positive impact of UNHCR's engagement with bar associations to enhance access to legal aid, UNICEF secured funding for a project to provide legal aid support to bar associations in earthquake-affected provinces and Izmir, Ankara and Istanbul targeting women and children affected by the earthquake.

Under UNHCR's collaboration with MoFSS, refugees received over 108,000 services through the social service centres supported by UNHCR, including close to 34,000 individual psychosocial support services. Additionally, with UNHCR's support, interpreters supported the work of the MoFSS psychosocial teams in 22,500 instances to assist refugees in the earthquake-affected provinces. During the year, more than 10,000 refugees with disabilities were supported by UNHCR under collaboration with MoFSS, by the social service centres and by the disability day care centres and home care support teams, reaching 20 per cent of refugees with a disability; more than 42,000 refugees with disabilities receive social assistance by MoFSS under SSN. To support social service delivery and quality, UNHCR organized trainings and workshops with the participation of over 2,000 MoFSS staff in coordination with the UN agencies aiming to support service provision to people with specific needs.

UNHCR continued to work closely with UN agencies under the UNSDCF Results Group 1 on Social Inclusion which covers joint actions related to social services, social protection, and health including MHPSS. UNHCR contributed to the upcoming national Vision Document on Strengthening Family and Action Plan of MoFSS, along with UNFPA and NGOs, underlining the specific needs of refugee families in Türkiye.

7. Outcome Area: Community Engagement and Women's Empowerment

Refugees and host community collaborate to address issues of concern to both communities.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
7.2 Proportion of people who have access to safe feedback and response mechanisms	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	90.00%	91.00%	90.00%
7.3 Proportion of women participating in leadership/management structures	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	63.71%	66.00%	63.71%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Despite challenges caused in the wake of the earthquake, UNHCR and PMM drafted the new Harmonization Strategy Paper and National Action Plan (HSP&NAP) for the 2023-2028 period. To gain an understanding on the views of the civil society, refugees and national organizations, UNHCR organized six workshops which engaged a diverse stakeholder base. The workshops resulted in the formulation of the HSP&NAP—a pivotal national policy document outlining collective responsibilities across stakeholder groups. The revised document incorporates new strategic priorities, alongside existing ones which were updated. It also incorporates newly emerged cross-cutting themes since its last version covering 2018-2023.

In response to evolving needs, particularly the growing need of refugees to access livelihood opportunities amidst the challenging economic conditions in Türkiye, UNHCR convened two protection dialogues. These dialogues served to enhance the understanding of 136 representatives from diverse sectors on the significance of refugees' economic inclusion and fundamental principles of protection. The involvement of the private sector, NGOs, refugee-owned enterprises, municipalities, cooperatives, IFIs, and academia created a holistic approach to addressing forcibly displaced and stateless people's needs. This collaboration played a crucial role in ensuring the economic inclusion of refugees, underlining the importance of engaging diverse stakeholders in UNHCR's efforts. Collectively, both engaging with non-traditional actors and working on a pivotal national policy document were crucial achievements to fostering social cohesion amidst the challenges encountered in 2023.

While a survey was not conducted in 2023, UNHCR's communication with communities survey for 2021/22 showed refugee communities' increased awareness of UNHCR's feedback, complaints and response mechanisms compared to 2018. In 2022, 38 per cent of phone survey respondents reported that they know how to give feedback and make a complaint, which is twice as much as those in 2018. Refugees use the UNHCR Counselling Line and the UNHCR email address to provide feedback and report complaints.

8. Outcome Area: Well-Being and Basic Needs

People affected by earthquakes are able to improve their living conditions with relief items and specific needs support.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In response to the earthquakes, UNHCR supported the Government of Türkiye with over 2.9 million core relief items to local authorities: the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), PMM, and the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS). The assistance included essential items such as blankets, sleeping bags, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, sanitary items and clothing. UNHCR also distributed winterization kits to 25,000 vulnerable individuals in 24 locations in the earthquake-affected provinces. Along with UNHCR, other organizations like ILO, IOM, UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO also supported the government in the earthquake response through provision of tents, containers, clothing, household items, food packages, essential medicines, and hygiene items.

UNHCR and eight partners initiated the specific needs fund (SNF) cash assistance program in June 2023, providing a one-time financial support of TRY 1,539 per person to 68,560 individuals (13,911 households). UNHCR also provided one-time winterization cash assistance, ranging from TRY 2,840 to TRY 5,900 to 72,030 individuals (16,551 households) affected by the earthquakes. A total of 73,981 individuals benefitted from these two basic needs programmes. Through targeted assessments for cash beneficiaries and effective coordination with partners, UNHCR ensured that cash assistance reached the intended refugees. In addition, to UNHCR winter support to earthquake-affected refugees, other agencies such as IOM, Save the Children, Care, SARD (only for Turkish citizens), Sevkar, GIZ (through ASAM, IBC, and SENED) and Concern Worldwide provided cash assistance benefitting 31,000 individuals (9,000 families) from the refugee and host communities. To avoid any duplication, UNHCR piloted a trusted cross-checking platform

which was implemented successfully.

In collaboration with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), UNHCR implemented cash-for-work activities to assist earthquake and flood-affected populations. DRC provided short-term employment opportunities to 366 refugees and 521 host-community members through cash-for-work schemes in Şanlıurfa, Kahramanmaraş and Hatay. By the end of the project in February 2024, the total number of project participants had reached 1,008 people. These efforts were highly appreciated by the municipalities and the refugees as they provided quick employment opportunities during the early recovery phase. To ensure sustainability and complementary to the project, DRC is planning to include some successful participants of this cash-for-work project in their new BMZ project, which will include long-term job opportunities.

IŞKUR's Applied Training Programme for Earthquake Relief (ATPER) offered on-the-job trainings to enhance beneficiaries' living conditions, practical skills and employment readiness. In 2023, IŞKUR provided on-the-job trainings to 767 earthquake-affected individuals over a period of 3 months and essential equipment to 14 job clubs in 10 affected provinces. The facilitated access to job opportunities, integrated individuals into the labour market, fostered community resilience, and contributed to the local economy. The job clubs played a crucial role in offering free basic labour market skills and motivating job seekers to find employment, thereby complementing vocational training programs and promoting holistic skill development. To ensure complementarity with other stakeholders and avoid duplications of efforts, the provinces of Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa were not included in the on-the job training project, as they were part of an IŞKUR-World Bank Project, having the same target groups.

9. Outcome Area: Sustainable Housing and Settlements

People affected by earthquakes find shelter support.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR was one of the first agencies to respond in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes. UNHCR supported Türkiye with 34,740 emergency shelters including tents, refugee housing units and family tents. The assistance was provided through coordination with the responsible government institutions; mainly the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) and the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM).

Recognizing the longer-term nature of the need for shelter because of the scale of destruction, and upon the request of PMM, UNHCR renovated 1,340 containers in the Harran temporary accommodation centre. UNHCR also placed a procurement order for 3,000 containers, with an aim to provide a more durable housing option for affected refugees. Five hundred of these containers were delivered to Adana Sarıçam temporary accommodation centre, which will accommodate refugees with specific needs. Additionally, by the end of 2023, the commitment of 2,500 containers was still under discussion with PMM to be delivered to Hatay.

11. Outcome Area: Education

Refugees benefit from public education and training in an unhindered way.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
11.1 Proportion of young people enrolled in tertiary and higher education	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	11.08%	10.00%	14.14%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Through strategic partnerships and initiatives, Türkiye succeeded in enrolling over 58,000 Syrian youth in higher education, demonstrating a commitment to fostering opportunities for refugee education and socio-economic integration. This represents an enrolment rate of approximately 14 per cent, a significantly higher rate than the global average of 7 per cent for refugee enrolment in higher education. Among these students, 56 per cent are male, and 44 per cent are female, reflecting Türkiye's commitment to gender equality in education.

The Higher Education Council (YÖK) and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) play a crucial role in facilitating higher education access. UNHCR Türkiye works closely with these stakeholders, providing advocacy and support whenever possible.

Despite the notable achievements in the education sector for refugees in Türkiye, new challenges may impede access to higher education. One such challenge is the cancellation of the university fee waiver, a policy generously implemented by the Government of Türkiye for seven academic years. Initially available exclusively for Syrian nationals, the cancellation of this fee waiver in the 2021/22 academic year poses a significant obstacle to recently graduated high school refugees aspiring to pursue higher education. UNHCR faces financial constraints, limiting its ability to mitigate the impact of this policy shift for all refugees seeking tertiary education, with many students unable to enrol due to these fees.

UNHCR maintains close cooperation with YTB, leveraging its sustainable and effective scholarship management system. In 2022, UNHCR, in collaboration with YTB, granted 540 DAFI scholarships and offered semester-based Higher Education Cash Grants (HECG) to 1,365 Syrian students. UNHCR also awarded 156 DAFI scholarships and directly provided semester based HECG to 1,282 students of other nationalities.

UNHCR continued to support the capacity of Public Education Centres (PECs), the biggest network of non-formal education providers in Türkiye, to meet increasing demands of youth and adults to participate in certified language and vocational courses by increasing the capacity by renovating and refurbishing the PEC classrooms. In total, UNHCR provided support to nine additional PECs, bringing the total number to 30 since 2020. Over 7,500 Syrians attended Turkish language courses, and 3,400 Syrians attended vocational courses in 25 PECs which were active in 2023.

The EU plays an important role in supporting education initiatives through the PIKTES+ (Project for Supporting Inclusive Education for Kids in the Turkish Education System+) Project, implemented by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). In addition to the substantial efforts of the Turkish Government, through this funding mechanism, the EU supports efforts to bolster enrolment rates and quality for basic education, such as transportation support, teacher trainings, provision of education materials and language classes.

Furthermore, UNICEF works closely with MoNE and civil society to promote quality education for all children in Türkiye, from early childhood to high school, focusing on skill development, promoting social cohesion, and preventing the exclusion of children with disabilities. UNICEF also plays a significant role in coordinating the Education Sector through regional and national working groups. This collaborative effort serves as one of the foundations of refugee education response, facilitating coordination among various stakeholders, including local authorities, NGOs and international organizations such as UNHCR, World Bank and other key stakeholders.

13. Outcome Area: Self Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

Refugees strengthen their self-reliance through livelihood opportunities.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
13.1. Proportion of people with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	36.07%	36.00%	36.07%
13.2. Proportion of people who self-report positive changes in their income compared to previous year	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	11.40%	11.00%	11.40%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2023, UNHCR, continued to advocate for refugees' socio-economic inclusion and access to employment by strengthening the capacities of national and local authorities, and fostering social cohesion through cooperatives. Building upon prior initiatives, significant results were achieved in areas contributing to the overarching goal of fostering self-reliance and integration.

To bridge the knowledge gap on issues related to the refugees' access to labour market, UNHCR collaborated with the Directorate General of International Labour Force at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (DGoILF), to conduct 'information days' on access of foreigners to formal employment. These sessions, held in five provinces (Adana, Mersin, Mardin, Şanlıurfa and Afyonkarahisar), facilitated the dialogue between the private sector and public institutions and improved knowledge on the work permit process, foreigners' legal rights and challenges in foreign workers' employment. From public institutions, the private sector and NGOs, 447 participants took part in the seminars.

To facilitate refugees' access to the labour market, UNHCR strengthened the capacity of İŞKUR, the Turkish Employment Agency with four staff and 19 interpreters who counselled refugees on access to jobs and registration for employment on the İŞKUR database. By the end of 2023, they had reached 14,460 people, facilitated over 14,000 referrals to İŞKUR counselling services and made 844 referrals to on-the-job training programs. UNHCR's partners also reached out to 1,200 people with job counselling and guidance complementing İŞKUR's work. UNHCR also supported İŞKUR with a software developer for the maintenance of a job-matching software system developed to match existing jobs with the skills and education level of job seeking forcibly displaced and stateless people.

UNHCR supported the Vocational Qualifications Authority with information material on the vocational qualification standards, which will be disseminated in 2024 to help refugees understand the requirements for qualifications while looking for jobs.

At the local level, UNHCR collaborated with seven municipalities to assist some 1,400 refugees to build their vocational, business and entrepreneurship skills, and linked them with employment opportunities.

To promote social cohesion, economic empowerment and facilitate women's participation in socio-economic life, UNHCR strengthened the capacity and knowledge of 13 women-led cooperatives involving refugees through training, equipment to recover from the earthquake-induced damages, and information about MADE 51.

UNHCR played a catalytic role by advocating for policy changes and participating in inter-agency fora such as the "Refugees' transition to employment", and by collaborating with the World Bank. For instance, effective November 2023, notable adjustments were made to the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) program, including the weighting of vulnerability for male beneficiaries aged 18 to 59 in payment calculations. Despite this change in approach, the criteria determining household eligibility remained unchanged, ensuring comprehensive assessment based on all members. This shift emerged from extensive deliberations and advocacy within the Task Team and the Economic Empowerment meetings, with active participation from UNHCR, aimed at facilitating a smoother transition to formal employment.

During monitoring visits, refugees, local communities and the authorities expressed positive feedback on UNHCR's interventions.

In Türkiye, partners focusing on self-reliance, economic inclusion, and livelihoods require enhanced access to data for program design, progress measurement, and comprehensive reporting to donors on achievements and lessons learned. The existing data gap poses an increasing challenge for Türkiye, particularly amidst donor fatigue and emerging emergency needs in other regions of the world.

14. Outcome Area: Voluntary Return and Sustainable Reintegration

Refugees considering return to Syria make informed and voluntary decisions.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR observed the voluntary return processes of PMM for around 19,900 Syrians in 11 provinces throughout 2023. Close cooperation with PMM enabled UNHCR to address individual protection concerns and systematic processing issues. During the year, 19,900 refugees received information on the conditions of return so that they could make informed and voluntary decisions.

A week after the earthquake, the government announced that Syrians registered and residing in the earthquake-affected provinces (Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Gaziantep, Malatya, Kilis, Osmaniye, Diyarbakir, Adana, Adıyaman, and Şanlıurfa) could return to Syria temporarily, without impacting their temporary protection status in Türkiye. The temporary exits began on 14 February, and the deadline for re-entry was 15 September 2023. According to information collected from public sources, over 73,000 Syrians opted to use this temporary exit permission, with over 90 per cent opting to return to Türkiye. This temporary exit permission likely accounted for fewer Syrians choosing to return to Syria in 2023 compared to previous years.

15. Outcome Area: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

Refugees have access to resettlement or complementary pathways that enable durable solutions.

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	20,403	20,000	16,801
15.2 Average processing time from resettlement submission to departure under normal priority	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	721.00	810.00	791.00
15.3 Number of people admitted through complementary pathways from the host country	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	7	10	20

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In response to the earthquakes in February 2023, UNHCR immediately contacted all refugees in the resettlement pipeline who were living in the earthquake zone to assess their well-being. Simultaneously, Turkish officials referred 200,000 refugees living in the earthquake-affected area to UNHCR for resettlement consideration. UNHCR went through a selection process targeting the most vulnerable for resettlement interviews. In total, UNHCR reached out to 51,616 of the most vulnerable refugees to consider them for resettlement. Eventually, a total of 24,552 refugees were interviewed in 2023.

States who responded to UNHCR's call to show solidarity with Türkiye included the following:

USA, France, Canada and Australia either provided increased quotas or prioritized processing of earthquake cases;
Germany, Finland, Norway and Slovenia changed criteria or brought forward their assessment schedule to facilitate rapid procedures for earthquake-affected cases;
Spain chartered flights to evacuate refugees within two weeks of the earthquakes;
Canada and the UK provided accommodation for the most vulnerable earthquake-affected refugees in their pipeline.

Some of the most vulnerable cases resettled included refugee children who lost all family members in the earthquakes. UNHCR organized emergency resettlement for these children to countries with relatives. UNHCR also worked with resettlement countries and Turkish officials to enable rapid processing, guardianship proceeding, and medical care to facilitate the departure of vulnerable children.

In 2023, a total of 16,801 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration to 18 countries, 94 per cent of those submitted were earthquake-affected refugees. In total, 13,900 refugees departed Türkiye in 2023 which was the highest departure rate since 2017.

UNHCR engaged TalentLift in Canada to provide potential candidates in nursing, machining, cabinet making and other fields for labour pathways. UNHCR is working on utilizing the Help website to host current family reunification information for refugees. A user-friendly interface will serve refugees to access accurate information on how to reunite with family members and prevent potential exploitation.

Furthermore, 97 complementary pathway activities were conducted for 54 refugees. These include ensuring refugees meet requirements of the pathways liaising with universities, employment agencies, and embassy officials to overcome barriers limiting refugees to access immigration channels. 12 refugees were assisted on education pathways, 41 refugees assisted with family reunification pathways and three refugees were assisted for labour pathways. Seven student refugees departed to Italy to take up scholarships with Luiss University in Rome. Three student refugees departed to Lithuania on scholarships with LCC University. One refugee nurse and two of his family members departed to Canada as part of the Economic Migration Pilot Program. Seven refugees were also reunified with family members in the UK and Germany.

2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

UNHCR enhanced community participation and inclusion through regular participatory sessions with diverse groups of refugees. In 2023, UNHCR conducted 73 participatory assessments with 585 individuals to reflect their views on its programme and advocate to improve their protection, assistance and solutions. Results were disaggregated by nationality, age, and gender, with consideration to specific needs. UNHCR and partner NGOs supported 89 community groups, including women and girls. UNHCR collaborated with, and supported, 81 refugee-led organizations as powerful drivers of participation and inclusion acting as community leaders and decision-makers and advocated on behalf of refugee communities locally.

The counselling line worked as a two-way communication channel with 306,000 unique callers. The Help page attracted 634,000 visitors and the Facebook Information Board had 9,670 new followers. New content was produced on 388 unique topics during 2023.

Section 3: Resources

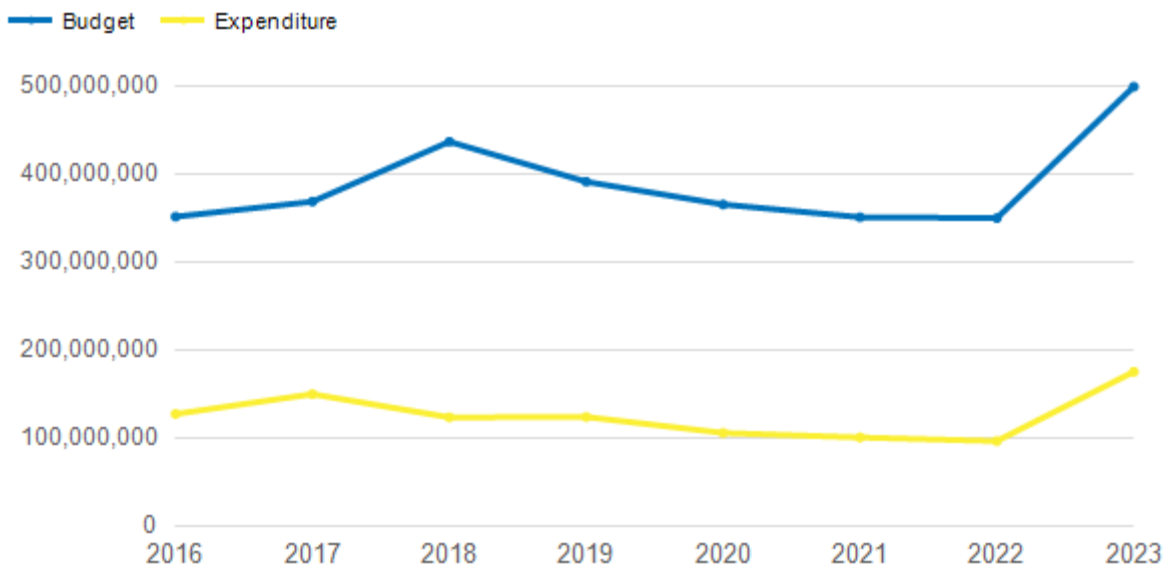
3.1 Financial Data

(Financial figures in USD)

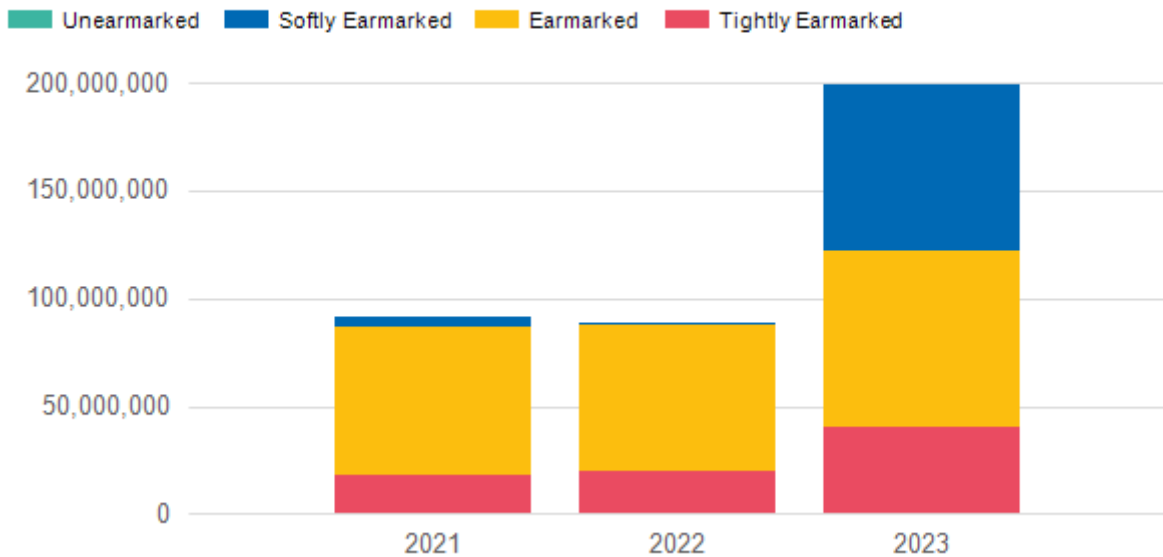
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	112,023,230	49,068,316	43.80%	49,068,316	100.00%
IA2: Assist	266,916,753	108,192,570	40.53%	105,199,546	97.23%
IA3: Empower	103,322,369	10,907,995	10.56%	10,907,995	100.00%
IA4: Solve	16,237,649	9,641,410	59.38%	9,641,410	100.00%
All Impact Areas		28,832,263			
Total	498,500,000	206,642,555	41.45%	174,817,267	84.60%

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA1: Access/Doc	73,774,130	32,441,233	43.97%	32,441,233	100.00%
OA2: Status	6,701,686	1,987,335	29.65%	1,987,335	100.00%
OA3: Policy/Law	3,700,843	598,954	16.18%	598,954	100.00%
OA4: GBV	6,179,188	2,532,306	40.98%	2,532,306	100.00%
OA5: Children	7,379,188	1,846,591	25.02%	1,846,591	100.00%
OA6: Justice	145,670,062	40,568,064	27.85%	40,568,064	100.00%
OA7: Community	41,577,820	3,573,381	8.59%	3,573,381	100.00%
OA8: Well-being	83,460,000	31,351,780	37.57%	30,288,639	96.61%
OA9: Housing	36,980,000	34,477,347	93.23%	32,473,408	94.19%
OA11: Education	38,916,730	5,179,444	13.31%	5,179,444	100.00%
OA13: Livelihood	22,827,820	2,155,170	9.44%	2,155,170	100.00%
OA14: Return	7,993,824	3,323,251	41.57%	3,323,251	100.00%
OA15: Resettle	8,243,824	6,318,159	76.64%	6,318,159	100.00%
EA17: Systems	6,008,798	6,951,823	115.69%	6,951,823	100.00%
EA18: Support	3,725,089	1,695,404	45.51%	1,695,404	100.00%
EA20: External	5,360,998	2,884,106	53.80%	2,884,106	100.00%
All Outcome Areas		28,758,208			
Total	498,500,000	206,642,555	41.45%	174,817,267	84.60%

Budget and Expenditure Trend



Contributions Trend by Type



3.2. Resources Overview

In 2023, UNHCR appealed for USD 348.5 million under the 3RP and requested USD 150 million through the flash appeal to respond to the immediate needs of the affected population in southeast Türkiye because of the earthquakes in February. Of the appealed amount, donors contributed USD 157.3 million to UNHCR Türkiye, amounting to about 25 per cent against the annual budget and 48 per cent against the earthquake appeal. The trend for the decrease in annual funding continued, despite the spike in funding towards the earthquake situation response.

Considering the earthquake situation, the allocated budget for the Türkiye operation increased by almost 50 per cent following the flash appeal. This increase in funding allowed UNHCR to broaden its scope to address people’s needs in the 11 affected provinces and beyond. Additionally, UNHCR’s support expanded

to include the host community, providing core relief items as part of the initial response. Furthermore, UNHCR worked in coordination with its partner organizations to effectively address the immediate needs of those impacted by the earthquake. The available funding and additional allocations enabled UNHCR to implement crucial protection activities, including but not limited to, facilitating registration for individuals seeking international protection, delivering targeted assistance to refugees with specific needs, supporting the state and community efforts towards social cohesion, promoting refugee engagement in education and self-sufficiency, facilitating refugee resettlement, as well as coordinating with both traditional and non-traditional stakeholders.

Section 4: Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

4.1 Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

When framing UNHCR's interventions in Türkiye, it is crucial to recognize the primary actors supporting refugees: the State of Türkiye and key donors providing bilateral and multilateral funding, mainly directed toward the State's initiatives or development projects related to refugees or targeting key refugee hosting areas. In this unique context, UNHCR's strategic focus has been twofold: firstly, providing technical and institutional support to the Turkish public institutions to enhance their capacities for refugee registration, status determination, access to protection, and provision of services; and secondly, assisting a network of partners in identifying vulnerable refugees to receive adequate support, and providing necessary assistance or helping to enable access to services.

However, the ongoing trend of funding reductions (including procedural limitation in accessing the largest available fund for refugees and mixed migration in Türkiye from the European Union) and increased competitiveness from regional and international agencies poses a significant challenge, potentially jeopardizing UNHCR's ability to sustain both intervention pillars in the near future. It is crucial to emphasize that registration serves as the gateway for refugees to legalize their stay, and to access rights and benefit from social safety nets, health services, employment rights, and education, also supported by the European Union through the Facility for Refugees. Therefore, enhancing UNHCR's capacity to engage and advocate with development actors, donors and private sector is essential to initiate a dialogue on sustaining the services provided by the Presidency of Migration Management and other relevant institutions, ensuring continued access to essential social services for refugees. Failure to ensure continuous efficient State structure to protect refugees will lead to increased vulnerability in Türkiye which at term can lead to further onward movements.

Additionally, supporting the Turkish State in finding solutions to address existing barriers to the long-term self-reliance of refugees, such as restrictive policies and bureaucratic implementation pertaining to work permits, is crucial. Overcoming such obstacles benefits not only refugees but also positively impacts the local economy, mitigating dependency issues. Moreover, improved data from the State made accessible to all stakeholders would support evidence-based programming, thereby increasing funding opportunities, and empower refugees to actively engage in the local economy or be better equipped for available durable solutions. Notably, approximately 800,000 Syrians have been born or raised in Türkiye since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, underlining the importance of facilitating their education and training to become valuable contributors to the Turkish economy.

To realize this ambitious vision, UNHCR must propose a new coordination mechanism to succeed the 3RP by the end of 2025. Discussions with the United Nations Resident Coordinator, other UN agencies, the Government, and civil society stakeholders are vital in 2024 to ensure that the new coordination structures are robust and flexible enough to align with development coordination efforts while continuing to provide a platform for civil society engagement and funding. This new framework should maintain visibility on refugees while being streamlined to accommodate the decreasing level of funding, engage further non-UN development actors such as the European Union but must also be lighter to reflect the reducing level of humanitarian funding.

Top of Form

Finally, in the aftermath of the earthquakes, UNHCR demonstrated

Top of Form, its capacity to respond quickly to a large-scale emergency being among the largest and fastest provider of in-kind assistance a few days after the disaster. This highlighted the importance of UNHCR maintaining a strong preparedness and emergency response capacity in the region.



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