

# Annual Results Report

**2023**

**Lebanon**

## Acknowledgements

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# Table of Contents

## Section 1: Context and Overview

- 1.1 - Changes to the Operational Context
- 1.2 - Progress Against the Desired Impact
- 1.3 - Challenges to Achieving Impacts
- 1.4 - Collaboration and Partnerships

## Section 2: Results

- 2.1 - Outcomes and Achievements
- 2.2 - Age, Gender and Diversity

## Section 3: Resources

- 3.1 - Financial Data
- 3.2 - Resources Overview

## Section 4: Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

- 4.1 - Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

# Section 1: Context and Overview

## 1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

In 2023, Lebanon continued to face a socio-economic decline due to the collapse of the banking sector, deflation of the currency, lack of a reliable social security system, weak public services, and an overall increase in market prices. Lebanon failed to form a Government and elect a president throughout 2023 and was administered ad interim. At the same time, it continued to be the highest, per capita, host country for refugees, with a Government estimate of 1.5 million Syrians (some 785,000 registered by UNHCR) and 11,200 asylum-seekers and refugees of other nationalities. Lebanon also hosts some 550,000 Palestinian refugees and 12 UNRWA camps.

In 2023, there was a notable increase in the number of municipal restrictions targeting Syrian refugees. Negative public discourse combined with repeated Government circulars on Syrians led to a stricter implementation of restrictive measures and to a deterioration of the protection environment. In 2023, raids combined with summary group deportations by Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) were implemented across the country, with highest frequency documented in the Bekaa region, followed by Beirut/Mount Lebanon (BML), the North and South. Increased risks of detention, deportation, searches at checkpoints and house raids endured throughout the year.

Syrians and other refugees in Lebanon had limited pathways to durable solutions, given the lack of conditions for large-scale voluntary, safe, dignified and durable returns and in the absence of local integration. Just over 1% of the population accessed resettlement to a third country or returned to Syria from Lebanon in 2023. The onward movements of refugees to third countries, including dangerous sea journeys, continued at similar pace as in previous years. One of the key changes observed in 2023 was a prominence of Cyprus as a main destination of boat movements from Lebanon, instead of Italy. In summer 2023 two incidents of pushbacks by Cyprus took place leading to the return of 109 Syrian nationals to Lebanon who were consequently deported to Syria.

The last quarter of 2023 saw an escalation of hostilities at the southern border with Israel with more than 70,000 people internally displaced and some 60,000 remaining in the areas affected by the conflict, exacerbating humanitarian needs, and triggering the activation of a new emergency humanitarian response for displaced Lebanese, refugees and migrants.

## 1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

### 1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

**Persons of concern enjoy a safe protection environment, with access to fundamental rights, fair procedures and specialized support services**

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	55.12%	53.07%
1.2 Proportion of people who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	17.29%	20.00%

Lebanon does not have a comprehensive domestic refugee policy or legal framework but it has, over the years, regulated refugees' stay in the country and incorporated the principle of non-refoulement in its national constitution.

Access to asylum has remained limited throughout 2023, as since 2015 the Government has directed UNHCR to stop registering Syrian new arrivals. Despite UNHCR advocacy, these restrictions continue. Nevertheless, the Government estimated that Lebanon hosts 1.5 million Syrian refugees and has maintained a lead role in responding to their needs through the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. In August 2023, UNHCR and the Government of Lebanon reached a data-sharing agreement, in line with international standards and practices. As a result, on 5 December, UNHCR Lebanon transferred the basic personal data of Syrian refugees known to UNHCR to the General Directorate of General Security (GSO).

A critical protection issue continued to be the limited ability of refugees to exercise their basic rights, including right to freedom of movement, due to their inability to obtain legal residency documents. Only those who arrived prior to 2015 are eligible which means legal residency rates remained low, though increased compared to the previous year, at 20% in 2023. UNHCR systematically engaged with the authorities and NGO actors to advocate for changes in the regulatory framework that would enable increased legal residency rates and to support the Government to advance towards commitments made by Lebanon at the London and Brussels conferences and the Global Refugee Forum.

Refugees without valid residency are at risk of refoulement, with Syrians who arrived in Lebanon after the High Defense Council decision in 2019 particularly vulnerable to detention and deportation. In 2023, group deportations were also carried out by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) as part of their border security and defence mandate. Additionally, Syrians who were unable to obtain a visa given the increasingly restrictive entry regulations were refused access to territory. As a result, many resorted to irregular means of entry, putting themselves at heightened risk.

### 2. Impact Area: Realizing Rights in Safe Environments

**In the context of a deteriorating socio-economic situation, further deterioration of affected populations' well-being is mitigated through equitable access to quality basic 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	42.00%	45.00%
2.3 Proportion of people with access to health services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	73.00%	82.00%

UNHCR supported highly vulnerable populations through life-saving protection interventions. UNHCR's multi-purpose cash assistance remained the key lifeline, with some form of cash assistance reaching 75% of the refugee population. In previous years, UNHCR's winter cash assistance reached the majority of the

refugee population, but in 2023 the winter programme could not be implemented due to lack of available resources. Some of the most vulnerable refugees received limited core relief item (CRI) assistance in response to winter shocks, but many unassisted refugees had to resort to harmful coping mechanisms. The lack of winter assistance, high inflation and low cash assistance transfer values resulted in 76% of assisted households spending less. In 2023, Syrian refugees remained very vulnerable with 9 out of 10 in need of humanitarian assistance.

UNHCR's shelter interventions focused on people with health and protection risks with critical socio-economic vulnerability. While shelter conditions have slightly improved, 55% of households still live in shelters that are dangerous, sub-standard or overcrowded, compared to 68% in 2022. Life-saving interventions targeted refugees living in tents in informal settlements: UNHCR supported populations at risk of eviction, living in collective shelters and other dwellings in precarious conditions. In 2023 a new approach to improve the rigidity of the shelters in informal settlement with direct community involvement was piloted. Success rates shall be monitored to inform future programming.

UNHCR's continued support to primary and secondary health services facilitated access for those in need with critical medical conditions, while the secondary healthcare programme was adjusted to limit support for only critical, life and limb saving situations and deliveries due to resource constraints. Due to cost-saving measures, patients' share of healthcare fees also increased, with a negative impact on the affordability of healthcare.

### 3. Impact Area: Empowering Communities and Achieving Gender Equality

**Affected populations are meaningfully involved in decisions that affect their lives, and engaged in finding local solutions and reducing social tensions**

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Actual (2023)
3.1 Proportion of people who have the right to decent work	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	17.29%	39.40%
3.2a Proportion of children and young people enrolled in primary education	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	61.00%	64.09%
3.2b Proportion of children and young people enrolled in secondary education	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	28.00%	29.00%
3.3 Proportion of people feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	81.00%	85.00%

In line with the Accountability to Affected People framework, UNHCR maintains a diverse architecture of platforms for refugees to interface with UNHCR and contribute to decisions that affect their lives. These include (1) one-way communication ([help.unhcr.org/Lebanon](http://help.unhcr.org/Lebanon), videos, WhatsApp/SMS), (2) dedicated complaint, feedback, and response mechanisms (CFRM) (hotline, digital & physical message, and face-to-face), (3) community engagement (refugee volunteers & groups), and (4) structured exchange (Participatory Assessments & monitoring). Across platforms, refugees can contribute views during structured dialogue and participate in regular and programme-specific monitoring; obtain information on rights and available services; request assistance and receive counselling or referral; and file complaints and feedback.

Together, these platforms offer diverse modalities to facilitate engagement, while ensuring overlap of functions to maximize accessibility across the age, gender and diversity (AGD) spectrum.

In particular, diverse CFRM – including phone (National Call Center and Field Helplines), digital messaging (email); physical messaging (complaint boxes), face-to-face exchange (information desks at Community Centres, frontliners)—are complemented by community engagement via refugee volunteers/groups. Together, feedback from these channels and findings from participatory dialogue inform the response. In 2023, 1.3 million calls were accommodated by UNHCR's National Call Centre, over 150,000 emails processed, and 527 refugee volunteers were consulted for information campaigns. Nearly 600 refugee outreach volunteers supported their community and shared feedback.

In 2023, 1 in 24 refugees was engaged in at least one stage of the programme management cycle (64%

female), and 2,170 refugees participated in 120 Community Groups and 740 in community initiatives (40% female). UNHCR held participatory assessments with 200 refugees on community self-help/self-management. Of those consulted, 59% were women/girls, 12% were people with disabilities and 29% were youth.

## 4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

**Persons of concern have access to a durable solution and are able to make free and informed decisions that ensure their safety and dignity**

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	9,814	10,130
4.2a Number of people who departed on resettlement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	7,000	8,985
4.2b Number of people who departed through complementary pathways	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	1,000	1,274

In 2023, UNHCR continued to verify returns to Syria. Returns verified in 2023 totalled over 10,100, reaching a slightly higher level than in 2022 (9,814 verified returns). In total, since 2016, UNHCR has verified more than 90,300 returns from Lebanon to Syria. In 2023, the General Directorate of the General Security of Lebanon (GSO) did not facilitate any group return movements to Syria. In 2022, slightly more than 700 individuals had returned as part of two GSO-facilitated return movements.

During 2023, 8,985 refugees were resettled from Lebanon. This represented an increase of 9.25% in resettlement departures from Lebanon compared to 2022 (8,224 persons resettled); the highest number of departures from Lebanon since 2017. It comprised 33.3% of the total departures from the MENA region (27,012). These departures provided permanent solutions for almost 9,000 refugees and alleviated the strain on Lebanon's health and educational systems, resulting in indirect protection dividends for the remaining refugees and asylum-seekers.

Additionally, UNHCR supported access to complementary pathways, including family reunification, labour opportunities, and other legal migration solutions available to refugees, further amplifying solutions for forcibly displaced people and resulting in the departure of 1,274 refugees. The year also marked close cooperation with ICRC and Miles4Migrants for support with documentation for two families and flight tickets for one family travelling as part of a family reunification.

Despite the challenging operational context in relation to statelessness, UNHCR implemented a legal aid project in collaboration with Frontiers Right and Intersos that contributed to the reduction of statelessness by assisting at least 1,570 stateless persons to acquire access to civil and identification documents and raising awareness among various stateless communities residing in Lebanon. UNHCR also facilitated research and dialogue that enhanced key stakeholders' understanding on important aspects of laws and policies relating to statelessness, highlighted gaps in the national legal framework, and advocated for legal reforms.

UNHCR and partners were able to increase the number of accompaniment visits to GSO in 2023. Important achievements were reached in refugees' access to civil documentation. This was a result of active advocacy by UNHCR in partnership with the Personal Status Department (PSD) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). The provision of technical assistance to the PSD and the organization of a mobile registration desk in Aarsal have led to improved conditions with access to civil documentation also for hosting communities residing in these governorates.

## 1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

The results of the UNHCR protection monitoring activities indicate that the socio-economic situation of refugees in Lebanon remained challenging with no prospects for improvement. The overwhelming majority of refugee households experienced severe hardships particularly with regard to buying food and paying rent. Challenges in accessing healthcare services and medicine continued to be reported as another priority need, all caused by poverty, loss of employment and limited livelihoods in Lebanon. The trends in key socio-economic indicators of Syrian refugee households did not considerably change in 2023 with expenditures of the overwhelming majority of Syrian refugees below the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket.

Restrictive measures against Syrian refugees significantly increased throughout 2023 following circulars issued by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) and local directives, pre-dating hostilities in the South and impacting refugees' access to labour, ability to rent, and freedom of movement. The total number of restrictive measures monitored by UNHCR in 2023 (>1,000) was more than double of those recorded in 2022.

The escalation of hostilities in the South of Lebanon further catalyzed restrictive measures and tension against Syrian refugees, with a considerable number of municipalities - especially in the South - applying restrictive measures mentioning security as a reason, alongside unpredictable and unequitable decisions on access to collective shelters. There were also reports of denial of rental space and of evictions, as well as increased tension with hosting communities.

Unequitable practices may have dissuaded displaced persons, including the most vulnerable, from seeking assistance. They also impacted asylum-seekers and refugees' freedom of movement, right to liberty, access to livelihoods and shelter, and enjoyment of basic services—thereby increasing vulnerability and straining depleting funding. In the absence of clarity from the central Government on a policy regarding access to shelter and services for those displaced in and from Southern governorates, local responders may uphold restrictive measures rather than systematically identifying and responding to the greatest needs. In addition, limited financial resources hindered UNHCR's response to meet the additional needs of vulnerable Lebanese and refugees in southern Lebanon.

## 1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

In 2023, UNHCR maintained its role as co-lead of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) alongside the Government of Lebanon, and UNDP on behalf of the UN. The co-leads worked with other key stakeholders including sector lead agencies, Government ministries and NGO forums to coordinate the response at the national and sub-national level, seeking to ensure an efficient approach to the provision of assistance and support to 1.96 million Syrian and Palestinian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese, including through ongoing institutional support to ensure the provision of basic services.

Given the ever-involving context in Lebanon including the enduring economic crisis and new shocks such as the escalation of hostilities in the South, UNHCR collaborated with the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) and key agencies to design the 'Lebanon Response Plan' - a cross-population humanitarian-stabilization response framework for delivery in 2024 based on extensive consultation. In 2023, among relationships with development actors, UNHCR continued to strengthen its partnership with the World Bank, including through investment in strengthened poverty/needs assessment and analysis (through the Lebanon Vulnerability Assessment Panels); and played an active role in fostering collaboration on durable solutions and cash-based interventions (in addition to sector co-leadership under the LCRP).

In 2023 UNHCR in Lebanon worked with a pool of 26 partners. UNHCR and its partners continued to provide capacity support and oversight to another 18 smaller local NGOs in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of interventions. NGO and commercial partners both received capacity support in humanitarian principles and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).



## Section 2: Results

### 2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

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

**Accurate PoC data is actively used to ensure equal and transparent access to protection and service provision and registration for Syrians is allowed to resume, allowing for individual documentation and enhanced protection**

**Protection-sensitive border management is enhanced and procedural safeguards are respected in all cases of deportation**

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	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
1.2 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	36.00%	40.00%	41.00%
1.3 Proportion of people with legally recognized identity documents or credentials	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	17.00%	19.00%	20.00%

#### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Through consistent verification and document renewal activities, data validity dramatically improved from 67% of the registered population having valid certificates at the start of the year to 79% of the registered population with valid certificates at the end of the year. Registration is conducted at individual level for all the individuals within the registration group.

In 2023, UNHCR and its partners provided legal aid to more than 85,000 refugees with regards to civil documentation, legal residency, protection from deportation, redress for exploitation, harassment and abuse, evictions, as well as on family and labour law. Around 11% of refugees who successfully renewed their residency based on UNHCR certificates were directly assisted by UNHCR or a partner.

An increase in birth registration continued in 2023, with 43% of births having finalized the registration process (compared to 36% in 2022). Out of all births of Syrian refugees that were registered to the level of the Foreigners Registry in 2023, 14% were directly supported by UNHCR or a partner.

UNHCR continued to advocate on behalf of individuals at risk of refoulement seeking admission to Lebanon at border crossing points and those held in immigration detention centres. In 2023, UNHCR conducted assessments of 1,590 cases of Syrians who were subject to deportation proceedings, and individual advocacy interventions were conducted on behalf of all individuals at risk of refoulement or family separation. As a result of UNHCR protection intervention and advocacy, 163 Syrian individuals were released from immigration detention. Relatedly, UNHCR's advocacy allowed to prevent the deportation of 60 refugees and asylum-seekers of other nationalities (non-Syrians). Despite the systematic presence of UNHCR in immigration detention facilities and advocacy interventions with authorities on cases presenting international protection needs, UNHCR recorded a relatively high incidence of refoulement from the country

#### 2. Outcome Area: Status Determination

## Asylum seekers can access effective (and cost free) RSD procedures

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
2.1 Average processing time (in days) from registration to first instance asylum decision	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	640.00	660.00	564.00

## Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR continued implementing mandate refugee status determination (RSD) for non-Syrian and non-Iraqi asylum-seekers, in the absence of a relevant national legal framework. The population continued to present a mixed movement pattern, with many asylum-seekers arriving to the country as migrant workers and seeking asylum due to a change of circumstances in their country of origin and/or deterioration of their socio-economic condition in Lebanon. Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt remained the main countries of nationality, representing over 90% of UNHCR Lebanon's RSD caseload.

In 2023, UNHCR completed a total of 1,026 interviews at first instance and at appeal levels. This represented a 12.6% increase compared to 2022. The increase in productivity is closely linked to coaching and in-house training. In addition, the schedule was centralized and exercises verifying attendance were conducted to reduce the number of no-shows.

The Office continued close cooperation on case management of sensitive and complex cases with relevant UNHCR stakeholders, including complex Syrian cases. UNHCR also continued providing counselling to individuals receiving a final rejection decision on IOM's Assisted Voluntary Repatriation Programme (AVRR).

## 4. Outcome Area: Gender-based Violence

**The risks of GBV are reduced, all GBV survivors have access to timely, safe and quality services and prevention and risk mitigation interventions continue**

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	75.00%	70.00%	58.00%
4.3 Proportion of survivors who are satisfied with GBV case management services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	85.00%	70.00%	98.00%

## Progress Against the Desired Outcome

The crisis in Lebanon has further exacerbated the root causes of gender-based violence (GBV) in the private and public sphere, including existing cultural and social norms and power imbalances. Eviction threats and debt accumulation led to a variety of protection risks, including observed increases in sexual exploitation by landlords and employers. At the same time, heightened levels of stress put pressure on families. Women and girls were particularly impacted (98% of all cases reported in the gender-based violence information management system (GBVIMS)), while low reporting by male survivors may be attributed to general stigma faced by survivors and an overall increase in negative perception and rhetoric on gender and diversity in 2023. The GBVIMS indicates that there was a 13% rise in GBV incidents against children compared to 2022.

Among adults, the main type of GBV reported was physical assault (37%), psychological/emotional abuse (34%), and sexual violence (20%). Some 63% of incidents happen at home, with 54% perpetrated by intimate partners. Forced marriage (69%) was the most reported type of GBV for children.

UNHCR GBV prevention programmes focused on both individual and community-level interventions to address discriminatory social norms. Awareness sessions covered intimate partner violence and child marriage and emphasized men's engagement. UNHCR's partner-implemented GBV prevention programmes reached 24,000 individuals, contributing to 28% of the sub-sector achievement. UNHCR's GBV response reached 98% of survivors known to UNHCR with psychosocial support including case management and access to specialized services. Some 8,700 survivors and persons at risk of GBV, including of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC), had timely access to quality free-of-charge response services. Safe shelter was provided to survivors requiring this service.

Additionally, 545 case workers and supervisors as well as Government staff were trained on GBV including through the annual coaching programme, out of which 97% demonstrated increased knowledge and skills. In parallel, UNHCR co-led the GBV Working Group jointly with MoSA and UNFPA at the national level and with an elected NGO at the sub-national level. The Working Group's focus was on support to survivors with disabilities, mapping and access to safe shelter, period poverty in Lebanon, and child survivors of GBV. GBV Referral Pathways were updated, and actors trained. UNHCR collaborated closely with UNDP to establish sector-specific gender and GBV mainstreaming focal points, who were trained in a training-of-trainers (ToT) on gender and GBV and subsequently rolled out training sessions in their sectors.

With the aim to ensure quality data and information management on GBV, UNHCR contributes to the GBVIMS Coordinator Position, administered by UNFPA. UNHCR's GBV case management partners are part of 14 GBVIMS data generating agencies contributing to enhanced knowledge on reported GBV. Several rounds of trainings were undertaken by the GBVIMS coordinator, including on case management, the updated GBVIMS system and refresher trainings. In addition, the information sharing protocol (ISP) was updated and signed by all data generating agencies.

## 5. Outcome Area: Child Protection

**Children are protected from abuse, neglect, violence, and exploitation**

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	88.00%	88.00%	80.00%
5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	22.82%	80.00%	20.00%
5.3 Proportion of unaccompanied and separated children who are in an alternative care arrangement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	92.00%	95.00%	94.00%

### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

The socio-economic crisis and its corollary effects continue to negatively impact the situation of refugee and asylum-seeker children. While still likely underreported, the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR) showed an increase of children reported to be engaged in child labour, from 4% in 2022 to 7% in 2023, affecting in particular boys aged 12 to 17 years. Rates of child marriage also increased, with 25% of girls aged 15 to 19 years reportedly married in 2023 (compared to 22% in 2022). Also, 61% of adults reported using violent discipline. The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) reported a steady increase of child protection referrals over the past years, with child protection risks leading to 11% of total referrals in the first half of 2023 (compared to 3% in 2020).

Due to gaps in the national system, the child protection sub-sector supported case management to address protection risks of the most vulnerable children. UNHCR's partners conducted almost 7,300 Best Interests Assessment (BIAs) and over 4,300 children at medium or high risk received case management,

representing 44% of the sub-sector's achievement for refugee children. Also, 124 Best interests Determinations (BIDs) were initiated.

With partners, UNHCR developed a Child Protection Monitoring Toolkit. Some 79% of children and caregivers noticed an improvement of their situation after receiving case management services and 84% of respondents were overall satisfied with the case management.

Through prevention activities as well as focused individual and group psychosocial support, over 17,700 children, adolescents and caregivers were reached (22% of the LCRP sector's achievement). Also, 433 case workers, frontliners, Government staff and outreach volunteers were trained on core child protection case management concepts and practices, national judicial services, and legal pathways for children at risk, as well as supporting children with disabilities. Some 93% demonstrated increased knowledge.

Guided by the global Strategic Collaboration Framework, UNHCR and UNICEF developed a joint workplan for child protection covering a wide range of issues including collaboration on the revision of the Lebanese child protection law (Law 422) and the national case management standard operating procedures, child justice, alternative care, social workforce strengthening and community-based child protection programming. Coordinating with UNICEF, UNHCR continued to support Ministry of Justice-mandated NGOs, building their capacity and providing limited direct support.

In parallel, 104 specialized child protection outreach volunteers continued to provide community-based support to children at risk by monitoring unaccompanied and separated children, children with disabilities, and street-connected children. They also facilitated structured play activities and followed up on tasks assigned by the social workers responsible for case management.

UNHCR continues to be an active member of the Child Protection Working Group and co-led the case management and the alternative care task forces.

## 6. Outcome Area: Safety and Access to Justice

**Barrier to accessing legal remedies and documentation are reduced**

**PWSN exposure to protection risks is mitigated and their needs addressed**

**Risks associated with detention are reduced through improved detention conditions and enhanced access to legal aid**

### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR and partners undertook 6,500 detention monitoring visits to various penitentiary institutions. These visits resulted in enhanced access to legal aid and more dignified standards of treatment for at least 3,616 detainees, through provision of legal assistance, essential medicine, psychosocial support, core relief items (CRIs) and food kits. Additionally, UNHCR has contributed to improving detention conditions by providing cleaning, hygiene, and stationary kits to 226 facilities of the Internal Security Forces (ISF) and donating five ambulances to ISF headquarters. The UNHCR activities ensured a consistent provision of legal aid, CRIs and access to medicine for detained refugees despite a rise in the incarcerated population, economic downturn and devaluation of the Lebanese Pound throughout 2023. UNHCR was also able to effectively address urgent vulnerable cases by providing medication and a range of medical consultations, including general, psychological, and psychiatric services. These activities have played an important role in addressing the needs of detainees and contributing to an overall safe environment for refugees and stateless persons within detention facilities.

Amidst worsening socio-economic conditions, UNHCR supported vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, older refugees, and women at risk, many of whom faced income loss, escalating vulnerabilities, and heightened protection risks. UNHCR provided non-cash assistance, such as counselling, psychosocial support, specialized services (including rehabilitation and assistive devices) and case management, benefiting over 22,500 individuals, which aimed to improve refugees' psychological and emotional wellbeing and enhance their capacities to cope with hardships.

In parallel, UNHCR supported over 7,600 households with cash for protection and 10,150 households with emergency cash. According to post-distribution and outcome monitoring, 96% of recipients reported an increased ability to meet basic needs through cash for protection. Some 98% reported reduced feelings of stress and improved living conditions. Moreover, 92% reported that cash for protection reduced tension between family members.

UNHCR contributed to the update of the interagency SOPs on Protection Case Management and to the adaptation of protection programming for the emergency response in the South, including for case management and cash for protection.

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

**Persons of concern are actively engaged in identifying, preventing, mitigating and addressing protection issues and have access to positive community practices, well-being and dignity**

**Persons of concern are included in national services and feel safer in their host communities**

**Persons of concern of different backgrounds, are meaningfully engaged in decisions that affect their lives, have access to timely information and their feedback informs programmes, activities and advocacy**

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	74.00%	100.00%	96.00%
7.3 Proportion of women participating in leadership/management structures	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	69.14%	75.00%	64.73%
7.1 Extent participation of displaced and stateless people across programme phases is supported.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Extensive: ≥70 points	Extensive: ≥70 points	Extensive: ≥70 points
7.1 Extent participation of displaced and stateless people across programme phases is supported.	Stateless Persons	Limited: ≤39 points	Unknown	Limited: ≤39 points

### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR promotes the meaningful participation of forcibly displaced and stateless people through various ways. In 2023, the Office engaged 72,700 persons (64% female) as volunteers and in community groups, conducted assessments, sought feedback through satisfaction surveys and received complaints through several channels.

As part of increasing the role of refugees in implementing activities, 62 refugee outreach volunteers (OVs) delivered structured psychosocial support services to 5,712 refugees; 568 OVs conducted 25,600 awareness/info sessions; and 739 persons participated in community-led initiatives. Moreover, UNHCR conducted an extensive mapping of feedback, complaints, and response mechanisms across 12 sectors to identify areas of strength and improvement, such as the need for overarching guidance on Accountability to Affected People (AAP) to inform SOPs, AAP training for staff and providing systematic feedback to communities. During participatory assessments, refugees suggested ways to enhance their self-management and self-help, such as supporting sports clubs, recycling projects and schoolbook exchange initiatives.

As part of its support to communities, UNHCR implemented innovative solutions to the country's energy and environmental crisis through the implementation of 58 Community Support Projects (CSPs), benefiting more



than 66 municipalities across Lebanon. These projects increased Lebanese and refugees' access to sustainable energy by providing solar-powered electricity to primary health centres, roads and water establishment stations. Additionally, through CSPs, UNHCR extended a much-needed support to the municipalities in the area of waste management and wastewater treatment, by providing equipment as well as rehabilitating sanitation facilities.

Through its diverse AAP architecture, UNHCR facilitated information-sharing with refugees; ensured that complaints and feedback were followed up on in a timely manner; and that refugee volunteers were engaged in the design of communication campaigns, including related to dangerous onward movements. The UNHCR Lebanon HELP website was launched in May 2023 and serves as a 'first stop shop' for refugees to access trusted sources of information on services and assistance available to them in Lebanon. From June to December 2023, the website received some 1.2 million views. In parallel, UNHCR sent 2,726 WhatsApp messages and SMS on topics including cash assistance, registration, education, health, counter-fraud and the HELP website. The National Call Centre (NCC) accommodated 1.3 million calls from refugees in 2023, of which 341,200 were unique individuals who were called or contacted by the NCC at least once. Additionally, some 150,000 emails from refugees were processed, of which 30% were referred for specialized support. A total of 527 Community Reference Groups (CRGs) and OVs (including 369 women) were consulted on communication campaigns and materials on irregular journeys, UNHCR health care coverage, the HELP website, cash and food assistance programmes and housing data attestations.

## 8. Outcome Area: Well-Being and Basic Needs

**Current levels of well-being of PoCs maintained through supporting PoCs to meet their basic needs**

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
8.1 Proportion of people that receive cash transfers and/or non-food items	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	89.39%	78.00%	75.00%
8.2 Proportion of people with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	95.00%	98.00%	97.00%

### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2023, UNHCR contributed to address the basic needs of up to 173,200 vulnerable refugee households through the provision of monthly multi-purpose cash assistance and a one-off cash grant in response to increased vulnerability generated by the conflict in the south of Lebanon. In addition, more than 145,000 refugee families received monthly multi-purpose cash assistance or food vouchers from WFP. During the reporting period, UNHCR managed to increase the overall transfer value received by each family, in order to mitigate inflation. To cover the remaining gap and immediate needs of refugees facing seasonal shocks, UNHCR distributed core relief items to 51,000 refugee households. In addition, core relief items were also provided to 9,286 vulnerable Lebanese households. Despite the needs and contrary to previous years, UNHCR could not implement any seasonal winter cash assistance programme to support vulnerable refugees facing increased needs and expenditures and reduced income opportunities during the winter period, due to funding limitations. Furthermore, by the end of 2023, UNHCR and WFP had to reduce the number of families benefiting from monthly cash assistance for basic needs by more than 92,000 families in light of a lower budget in 2024, reducing the coverage of the refugee population to 60%, leaving 30% eligible vulnerable families without regular cash assistance. UNHCR reached approximately 75% of refugees through its different cash programmes or core relief items distribution throughout 2023, a lower coverage than the baseline value due to the absence of a winter cash programme in 2023.

UNHCR's multi-purpose cash assistance endline post distribution and outcome monitoring (PDOM) indicated that 60% of assisted families could meet half or more of their basic needs compared to 36% at the beginning of the year. The PDOM results also showed that 76% of recipients reported that their households had improved living conditions moderately or significantly and 74% reported moderate or significant reduction in financial stress. Despite receiving and acknowledging the importance of assistance, about 76% of assisted households were still showing expenditure below the minimum survival expenditure basket.

Moreover, 91% of assisted refugees had turned to harmful coping strategies, including 13% having resorted to emergency coping strategies. Nevertheless, the feedback on the impact of monthly cash assistance from focus group discussions showed that refugees strongly appreciate the assistance provided by UNHCR which is preventing further deterioration in their economic conditions, despite being too low to address all their basic needs and reduce indebtedness. Furthermore, refugees expressed their concerns about not receiving winter cash assistance and the importance of such a type of assistance to cope with severe winter conditions, especially for families residing in informal settlements.

## 9. Outcome Area: Sustainable Housing and Settlements

**PoCs have enhanced well-being and protected space through improved access to dignified living conditions**

### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2023, the UNHCR-led shelter sector provided support to approximately 272,000 beneficiaries, with the majority being Syrian refugees (82.5% reached directly by UNHCR). Despite efforts, shelter actors covered only 40% of the targeted population outlined in the sector plan with UNHCR itself covering up to 35% of shelter needs of Syrian refugees, hindered by insufficient funds. Priority was given to marginalized families residing in hazardous shelters, focusing on health and protection risks.

The focus of life-saving interventions was primarily on refugees residing in tents within informal settlements, constituting 20% of the total population. These communities endured worsening conditions, recurrent emergencies, and severe exposure to adverse weather conditions. Assistance extended beyond informal settlements to refugees in impoverished urban areas and collective shelters, with a participatory approach ensuring the inclusion of women, men, girls, and boys in decision-making processes.

Given the limited involvement of partners in addressing threats within informal settlements, UNHCR developed a cohesive strategy centred on mitigating three primary hazards: i) harsh winter conditions and their health implications in crowded tents; ii) flood risks impacting hygiene; and iii) fire hazards. UNHCR provided essential support to 183,000 refugees, distributing weatherproofing kits, enhancing drainage systems at 131 sites accommodating 16,500 refugees, and conducting fire safety campaigns benefiting 90,000 refugees. Additionally, emergency standby capacity facilitated the rebuilding of shelters for 6,500 refugees affected by storms, floods, fires, and evictions.

To enhance predictability in Shelter & Wash sectors in informal settlements, UNHCR coded 43,200 tented structures in Lebanon - 48% of the total settlements but 71% of their population - for more efficient multi-year programming, increasing sustainability and reducing costs.

The sector addressed the housing needs of refugees facing degradation, tenure insecurity, and rent pressure, often pushing them towards precarious living situations or informal settlements. UNHCR played a significant role, contributing to 34% of the sector's achievements by addressing challenges such as insalubrity in residential buildings, safety concerns in collective shelters, and rising eviction rates. Specific interventions included upgrading shelters for 5,700 refugees, improving common areas in 33 collective shelters, and implementing cash-for-rent programs for 8,000 referred refugees, prioritizing the most vulnerable groups. Shelter interventions included development of written Occupancy Free of Charge (OFC) agreements with the property owners for up to 12 months coupled with HLP awareness sessions focusing on roles and responsibilities of the refugee tenants and owners.

In poor neighbourhoods outside informal settlements, an Area-Based Approach was adopted, integrating holistic shelter interventions with water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), community projects, and healthcare initiatives. This comprehensive approach aimed to positively impact both refugees and host communities within a multi-sectoral framework increasing social cohesion through the Humanitarian Development Nexus.

## 10. Outcome Area: Healthy Lives

**Persons of concern have sustained access to healthcare**

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
10.1 Proportion of children aged 9 months to five years who have received measles vaccination	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	89.00%	90.00%	89.00%
10.2. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	97.00%	97.00%	89.90%

## Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In order to facilitate access to primary healthcare (PHC) services, UNHCR subsidizes cost of consultations and laboratory tests to refugees and host communities and provides free vaccines, chronic and acute medications through the national supply system. A total of 118,700 consultations including mental health were subsidized in 11 UNHCR supported centres. Facilities absorbed the increase in number of subsidized consultations within the available resources resulted from the high demand, deteriorating economic situation, increase in awareness, decrease in stigma and increased capacity to handle cases due to implementation of the Mental Health Gap Action Program (MhGAP).

Community empowerment and mobilization remained a crucial activity. A total of 85,100 individuals were reached with information on access to health services, non-communicable and communicable diseases, and maternal and child health among others. In line with the Nutrition Sector guidance, volunteers ensured Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) screening and referral to Mild and Severe Acute Malnutrition Services.

As the main humanitarian agency for hospitalization care for refugees, UNHCR subsidized 60,400 life- and limb saving admissions in 33 contracted hospitals. The decrease from 2022 (65,100) is due to the change in UNHCR coverage implemented in May 2023. Out of total, 57.6% was for pregnancy and childbirth with 31% C-section rate. Some 76% of admissions were for women and 21.4% for children under 5 years. The proportion of deliveries attended by a trained health care professional increased from 97% in 2022 to 99% in 2023 (Health Access and Utilization Survey HAUS, 2023) noting that 91 % occurred in hospitals while remaining in midwife clinic or partner supported facilities.

UNHCR in collaboration with partners and UN agencies under the patronage of the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) administered more than 1.14 million doses of oral cholera vaccine to residents of all nationalities residing in high-risk areas from November 2022 to February 2023. UNHCR further supported 10 hospitals with medical items and extended its support to the MoPH with 14,000 Cholera Rapid Diagnostic Testing (RDT) kits and 200,000 Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) as contingency stock for communicable disease preparedness and response. Rapid Response Teams (RRT) were extended to Epidemiologic Surveillance Unit (ESU) of MoPH to conduct sample testing and inform the public health surveillance in the country. UNHCR ensured refugees received health related information through utilizing different communication channels including the short text message, social media, outreach volunteers, and WhatsApp communication Tree.

Finally, to ensure vulnerable populations have equitable access to health services, UNHCR jointly led the health sector together with WHO under the Government-led Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. UNHCR is an active member of the Reproductive Health and Nutrition Working Groups and the Mental Health Task Force. Following the conflict in the South, UNHCR took an active role in coordinating efforts with the MoPH, the Disaster Response Department and stakeholders to respond to the needs of the displaced.

## 11. Outcome Area: Education

**Gaps in education are bridged, resulting in improved human capital and transferable skills**



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	5.79%	6.00%	5.72%
11.2 Proportion of children and young people enrolled in the national education system	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	40.73%	50.00%	48.37%

## Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Education in Lebanon continued to be impacted by the deteriorating economic situation, with public school teachers on strike for more than two months in 2023. While the VASyR showed increases in children enrolled in different forms of education, fewer children participated in formal and non-formal education compared to prior to the ongoing economic crisis. UNHCR continued to advocate for inclusion of refugees in the national system, achieving positive developments on access to official exams and the waiving of documentation requirements at primary level.

UNHCR deployed over 360 refugee Education Community Liaison (ECL) volunteers in afternoon schools to bridge communication between community and school administration, mitigate issues related to bullying, and create safe learning environments. ECLs also facilitate homework support, organized 2,600 walking groups and referred 1,600 children to child protection and over 4,300 to education services. Monitoring showed trust and appreciation of children, parents and school administrators for ECLs. In parallel, 15,000 children at risk of drop-out were supported through community-based homework support and retention programmes, building academic and life skills. UNHCR also piloted school-based retention support, working with second shift teachers.

As in 2022, UNHCR worked with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and other partners to implement the Summer School. UNHCR reached over 106,500 host (61%) and refugee children (39%) in 369 schools with sports and arts activities, fostering social cohesion and more than doubling its reach from 2022. To support out-of-school children, over 3,800 children and youth were reached with structured basic literacy and numeracy (BLN) programs. Where available, UNHCR facilitated transition to formal education through UNICEF's school bridging programme. UNHCR also piloted community-based BLN. Additionally, 331 out-of-learning refugee and host youth attended market and competency-based vocational trainings. UNHCR fostered strategic collaboration with key governmental entities, United Nations agencies, and experts from the private sector. These partnerships played a pivotal role in ensuring an 87% internship and job placement rate for graduates of the programme.

Finally, Lebanon serves as a pilot country for the global 15by30 Roadmap to achieve 15% enrolment of refugees in higher education by 2030. UNHCR continued to collaborate with Government as well as United Nations and university actors to align strategies and foster sustained stakeholder commitment to expand higher education access for refugees across five 15by30 pillars. Through DAFI, 99 students were supported in attending universities, with 14 graduating in 2023. As part of the scholarship programme, DAFI students engaged in peer-to-peer support and volunteer activities to give back to the community.

## 14. Outcome Area: Voluntary Return and Sustainable Reintegration

**Through a coordinated approach, all stakeholders advocate for the principles of voluntary return in safety and dignity to be upheld and are prepared to provide adequate support as needed**

### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR continued to advocate with the Government of Lebanon for the principles of voluntary return in

safety and dignity to be upheld, and for protection space in Lebanon to be maintained until the factors inhibiting refugees' return to Syria are addressed. While not facilitating returns to Syria at this point in time, UNHCR, through counselling, continued to provide some support to refugees in 2023 who had themselves taken the decision to return. UNHCR also continued to engage with various stakeholders and among others organized and chaired two Durable Solutions Group meetings as part of coordination and preparedness efforts as well as to ensure evidence-based advocacy.

## 15. Outcome Area: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

**Opportunities for resettlement are increased to match resettlement needs for vulnerable persons of concern, particularly those presenting protection needs.**

Indicators	Population Type	Strategy Baseline	Target (2023)	Actual (2023)
15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	9,656	11,800	8,625
15.2 Average processing time from resettlement submission to departure under normal priority	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	571.00	580.00	768.00

### Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR submitted 8,625 persons for resettlement to over 13 different resettlement countries in 2023. Submissions were made based on quotas allocated to Lebanon by resettlement countries in 2023. Women and girls at risk of gender-based violence, LGBTIQ+ persons and children at risk of child abuse and/or exploitation comprised the target populations which benefited from resettlement during the year. UNHCR submitted for resettlement more than 81 LGBTIQ+ persons, 70 cases with medical needs (384 people, 4% of the submissions) and 173 cases of Women and Girls at Risk (568 people, 7% of the submissions). UNHCR's robust identification and case processing mechanisms facilitated timely decision-making by resettlement countries and demonstrated the capacity of the Office to deliver quality results within tight deadlines.

The overall acceptance rate was 95%, an increase of 1.4% compared to 2022. The protection needs of Syrians and refugees of other nationalities were mitigated and/or addressed by resettlement departures. The average processing time from resettlement submission to departure under normal priority was below the baseline as resettlement countries such as Australia, Canada and the United States cleared their departure backlog of refugees who were waiting since 2020 and earlier. This was a positive development as refugees finally departed and started their new lives after few years being in limbo. had been waiting since 2020 or earlier. This was a positive outcome, as long-awaited solutions This was achieved through advocacy and close cooperation with all partners; refugees, resettlement countries, IOM, Lebanese Government to support refugees in getting documentation, updated reports and facilitating their exit clearance process.

## 2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

UNHCR continues to advance age, gender, and diversity inclusive planning and programming across thematic areas. In 2023, systematic age and gender disaggregation was ensured across all programmes. For people with disabilities, the protection sector drafted "In Focus: Women, Girls, Men and Boys with Disabilities in Lebanon" that provided a comprehensive overview of needs, policy gaps, and recommendations to improve inclusive interventions. Registration standard operating procedures were also updated to include the adapted version of the Washington Group Questionnaire for the identification of persons with disabilities. In parallel, 2,170 refugees and host community men, youth, older people and people with disabilities formed community groups and 740 participated in community-led initiatives. For refugees with diverse SOGIESC, specialized case management and services were provided, with 150

UNHCR/specialized partner staff trained on SOGIESC.

In education, 1,760 children with specific education needs were provided with specialized education support.

Community-based engagement and support remained a bedrock of response, with Community Centres (CDCs) serving as safe and public spaces for refugees and host communities alike to access protection, social, legal, learning, and other services and activities, within a one-stop-shop. In 2023, 60,000 refugees and Lebanese (72% female, 23% children) benefited from 240,000 instances of participation in community centres and 4,180 persons (85% females) took skills trainings to enhance their socio-economic situation. 568 outreach volunteers (63% women) reached 401,600 persons (58% female) and referred 38,800 persons heightened risk (48% female). Finally, 62 outreach volunteers delivered community-based psychosocial support to 5,712 refugees (65% women, 15% older persons) given rising mental health needs and over-stretched services.

## Section 3: Resources

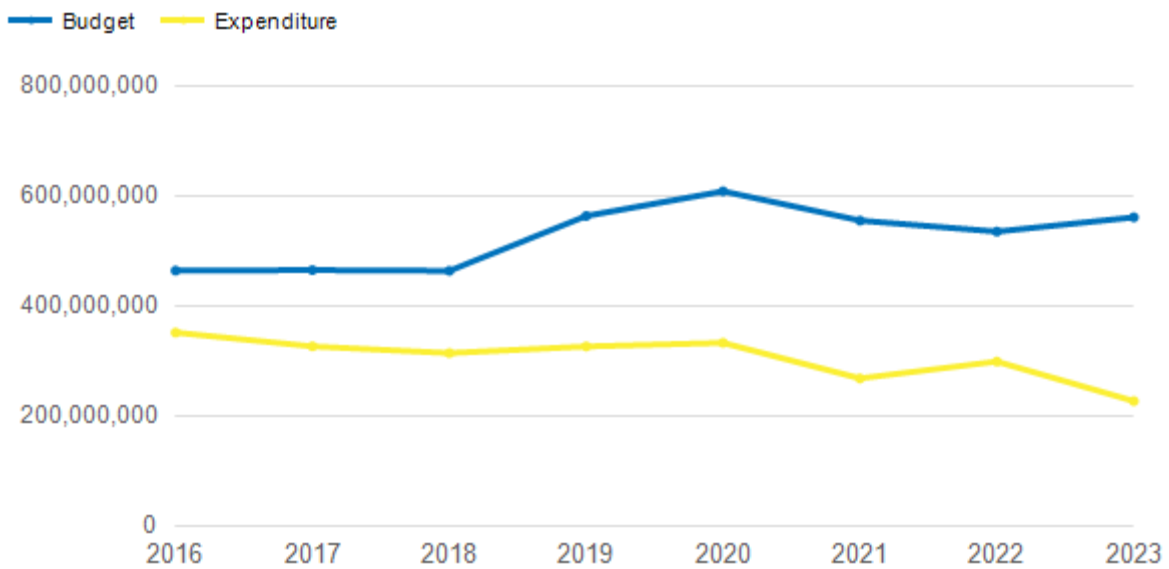
### 3.1 Financial Data

(Financial figures in USD)

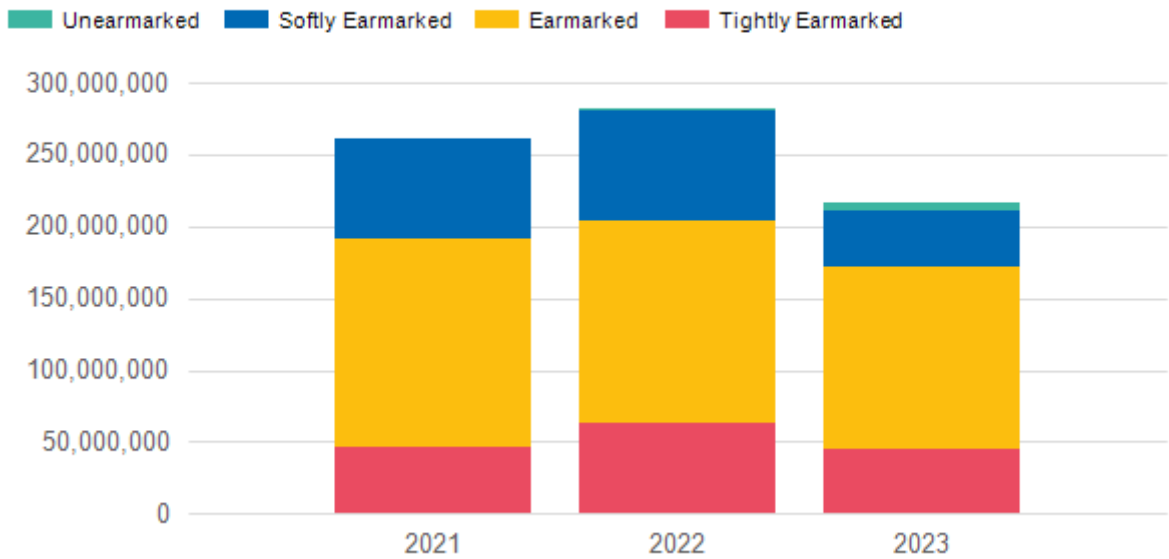
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	78,815,222	61,390,099	77.89%	61,108,354	99.54%
IA2: Assist	446,910,287	137,771,254	30.83%	137,771,254	100.00%
IA3: Empower	25,821,663	19,360,230	74.98%	19,360,230	100.00%
IA4: Solve	8,638,138	8,296,371	96.04%	8,296,371	100.00%
All Impact Areas		19,105,636			
<b>Total</b>	<b>560,185,310</b>	<b>245,923,591</b>	<b>43.90%</b>	<b>226,536,210</b>	<b>92.12%</b>

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA1: Access/Doc	13,182,099	12,658,182	96.03%	12,376,437	97.77%
OA2: Status	3,045,377	2,456,870	80.68%	2,456,870	100.00%
OA4: GBV	9,150,755	7,330,011	80.10%	7,330,011	100.00%
OA5: Children	11,850,755	7,864,575	66.36%	7,864,575	100.00%
OA6: Justice	32,760,103	23,045,185	70.35%	23,045,185	100.00%
OA7: Community	25,821,663	19,360,230	74.98%	19,360,230	100.00%
OA8: Well-being	319,953,966	71,612,739	22.38%	69,872,542	97.57%
OA9: Housing	28,581,089	13,117,822	45.90%	13,117,822	100.00%
OA10: Health	77,161,090	40,603,376	52.62%	40,603,376	100.00%
OA11: Education	11,711,089	8,865,000	75.70%	8,865,000	100.00%
OA14: Return	3,029,392	2,975,915	98.23%	2,975,915	100.00%
OA15: Resettle	5,608,747	5,320,457	94.86%	5,320,457	100.00%
EA18: Support	9,503,053	5,312,514	55.90%	5,312,514	100.00%
EA20: External	8,826,132	8,035,275	91.04%	8,035,275	100.00%
All Outcome Areas		17,365,439			
<b>Total</b>	<b>560,185,310</b>	<b>245,923,591</b>	<b>43.90%</b>	<b>226,536,210</b>	<b>92.12%</b>

### Budget and Expenditure Trend



### Contributions Trend by Type



## 3.2. Resources Overview

With the Syria crisis in its 13th year and the growing needs of vulnerable refugee and Lebanese communities due to the country’s deepening socio-economic crisis, further compounded by the impact of the Gaza situation on Lebanon, only 39% of UNHCR’s budget (\$ 560.2 million) was met in 2023 despite the donors’ generous support.

Funding in 2023 decreased from the funding level of \$289.1 million in 2022 despite the Office’s extensive fundraising efforts. Funding from the United States continued to represent a substantial proportion of UNHCR’s total funding in Lebanon. Other major donors such as Germany, the European Union, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Canada continued to maintain high levels of funding in 2023. Some donors to UNHCR in Lebanon decreased their funding while still maintaining robust support in terms of advocacy.

Furthermore, the Office received contributions from private sector donors at the estimated total of \$5.4 million in 2023.

In 2023, the vast majority of funding received was broadly earmarked (80%), either at the country or situation level, a slight increase from 2022. Flexible funding remained crucial to UNHCR in Lebanon, allowing it to adapt its response and priorities as new needs arose, like winter storms and the impact of the Gaza situation on Lebanon.

As the Syrian crisis further protracts, the level of funding is anticipated to decrease due to multiple emerging and ongoing refugee crises globally as well as a likelihood of decreased humanitarian assistance budgets of some of the major donors resulting in increased challenges to maintain the current funding levels going forward.

Against this funding backdrop, UNHCR was obliged to actively review and prioritize activities multiple times in 2023, to be able to respond to pressing priorities, including the displacement caused by hostilities in the South. The difficult prioritization was based on needs assessment data and feedback from beneficiaries, aspiring to keep meaningful assistance values in individual assistance programmes, and keeping a strong focus on community-based programmes. Without available resources, UNHCR was unable to provide cash winter support, and somewhat mitigated this gap through the provision of core relief items to a narrow group of the most vulnerable refugees.

In view of the funding outlook, a staffing review resulted in more consolidation and centralization of functions for the year ahead, notably in Education, Programme, Supply and Administration and Security. In addition to the centralization, the Office opted for the nationalization of certain positions notably under Refugee Status Determination, Community Based Protection, Field and Registration and Identity Management. In total, 100 positions were inactivated, and 10 new positions created. Moreover, as part of the staffing review, UNHCR reviewed the designation of offices. Consequently, the Beirut/Mount Lebanon office reverted back to Field Office status. Qobayat became smaller to reconfirm its status as a field unit with more frequent, flexible forms of support and missions from the Sub Office in Tripoli.

## Section 4: Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

### 4.1 Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

The challenging operational and financial situation in 2023 prompted many reflections on UNHCR's programme delivery, in search of potential for harmonization and efficiency gains. Pressing humanitarian needs were on the increase throughout the year, and the main actors providing support to displaced communities country-wide were searching for out-of-the-box, innovative solutions to address needs in an increasingly complex situation with limited funding prospects.

Several projects were successfully piloted in 2023, including detailed tent coding in informal settlements, trainings for digital skills, a community-based approach for shelter rehabilitation and an innovative approach to counter anti-refugee rhetoric through local opinion leaders. These projects will be continued in 2024 if the available resources permit.

In order to strengthen programme design, targeting, programme delivery, cooperation, advocacy, and accountability, an external evaluation of the UNHCR-WFP Joint Action for Multipurpose Cash Assistance between 2019 and 2021 was finalized and published in 2023, with the evaluation results informing 2024 program planning.

Despite these successes, UNHCR became starkly aware that assisting populations at the same level as before in all sectors is likely to no longer be a possibility. Consequently, talks with stakeholders are ongoing to find areas where significant reductions or responsible disengagement would be possible in the near future.



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