

# INDIA

August 2021

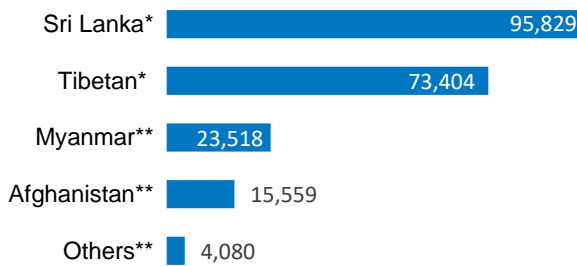
As of 31 August 2021, around **43,157** refugees and asylum-seekers are registered with UNHCR in India, with a majority from Afghanistan, **15,559** and Myanmar, **23,518**. Out of this, **520 individuals** were registered in **August 2021**.

Violence in connection with **food insecurity** and **lack of opportunities** are the main drivers of displacement. UNHCR's two-fold strategy in 2021 prioritizes **emergency assistance** and **protection needs**, as well as long-term solutions with a focus on inclusion and access to basic services.

UNHCR's work in India focuses on **boosting the self-reliance** of refugees and asylum-seekers, **advocating** for legal stay, identifying **protection risks**, and promoting their **integration** through the Government of India, and collaborating with **11** national NGO partners.

## PERSON OF CONCERN AS OF 31 AUGUST 2021

### Origin<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Country or Territory of Origin

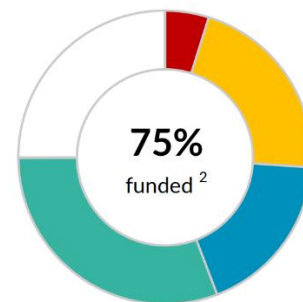
\*Refugees registered and assisted by the Government of India. Statistics with regard to Sri Lankan refugees and Tibetan are taken from MHA Annual Report 2019-2020 <https://www.mha.gov.in/document/annual-reports/annual-report-ministry-of-home-affairs-2019-2020>

\*\* Refugee and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR India (as of 31 August 2021)

## FUNDING AS OF 13 SEPTEMBER 2021

USD 14.2 M

UNHCR India financial requirements



<sup>2</sup> The percentage funded (75%) and total funding amount (\$10,654,998) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$3,557,843 representing 25% of the financial requirements.

## OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

India has a long tradition of playing a host to a large number of refugees. India is reliable partner in the world to guarantee that people who need help will find a place and safety.

UNHCR has worked in India since 1951 for the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers in India. UNHCR works in coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, NITI Aayog, United Nations Country Team, and its NGO partners based across 15 states of India.

Recently, due to violence and instability in neighbouring countries, there has been a rise in asylum seekers approaching UNHCR India for registration and assistance.

Further, the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect refugees and asylum seekers. The number of refugees and asylum-seekers requesting basic assistance has increased, including for food, rent and medicines.



Refugees and asylum-seekers in Delhi receive their first jab of the coronavirus vaccine. **Till 31 August 2021, 20,165 refugees and asylum seekers have been vaccinated, which includes the Sri Lankan refugees not registered with UNHCR.** (©UNHCR/Daniel Ginsianmung)

## Working with Partners

UNHCR coordinates the protection and assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers in collaboration with:

- **The Government of India:** Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs.
- **UN:** UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and contributes to India-United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) for 2018-2022.
- **Formal partnership agreements with nine national NGOs:** Bosco Organisation for Social Concern and Operation (BOSCO), Socio-Legal Information Centre (SLIC), Bal Raksha Bharat (Save the Children), Fair Trade Forum India (FTF-I), Development and Justice Initiative (DAJI), Gandhi National Memorial Society (GNMS), ActionAid (AA), Oferr, Adra, and Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), and Sphere Network.

## Main Activities



### Advocacy and Coordination

In India, UNHCR supports local institutions and NGO partners with setting up referral pathways for refugees and asylum-seekers to increase skills and knowledge on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and Child Protection.

- UNHCR held 23 training sessions on SGBV and PSEA with the displaced population. Through these sessions, UNHCR reached 634 refugees and asylum-seekers across Delhi, Jaipur, and Mewat. 2,010 children are supported for bridge and tuition classes to ensure protective education to rebuild their lives.
- UNHCR and its partners with the support of the 24/7 helpline are providing continuous pre-registration counselling to asylum-seekers in India. 41 refugees and asylum-seekers received protection interventions and 420 email responses were provided.



### Health

The impact of COVID-19 continues to affect the protection situation of the displaced population and UNHCR continues to advocate for the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers into the national vaccination programme. By the end of August, 20,165 refugees and asylum-seekers were vaccinated, which includes Sri Lankan refugees not registered with UNHCR.

- UNHCR partners in Delhi, Mewat, Jammu, and Hyderabad assisted 762 refugees and asylum-seekers in accessing basic health services to nearby hospitals.
- 162 refugees and asylum-seekers were provided with medicines by UNHCR partner BOSCO.
- Three health awareness sessions on family planning, monsoon preparedness, and vector-borne diseases were attended by 1,389 refugee and asylum seekers.
- In Telangana, a COVID-19 awareness session on vaccination and social distancing norms was conducted with 41 children and youths.
- UNHCR continues to work closely with persons with specific needs as they face heightened risks, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, and children.



### Providing life-saving assistance

UNHCR has responded to the immediate needs of increasing numbers of persons of concern impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by meeting their unprecedented necessities for food, sanitation, and cash-based allowance.

- UNHCR partners have distributed food assistance to 1,976 families in Delhi, 430 households in Mewat, 119 in Punjab, 90 families in Jaipur, 30 families in Pune, 2,419 families in Hyderabad, and 8 families in Bengaluru.
- 126 refugees and asylum-seekers were provided with cash-based assistance to meet their basic requirements of food, rents, or medicine.



### Community-based protection interventions

UNHCR through community-based interventions works on mitigating protection risks and builds resilience of the displaced populations, strengthens integration, expands alliances and protection networks.

- 17 refugee groups in Mewat participated in strengthening their understanding of social awareness related to laws revolving around employment, child protection, and fake identity proof documents.
- 11 meetings with 105 participants which includes community representatives and varied refugee groups from Afghanistan, Sudanese, and Rohingya communities.
- UNHCR is continuously assessing the needs of the persons of concern and sending appropriate referrals to partners for interventions related to psychosocial, medical, and financial assistance.



### Durable solutions and livelihoods

The devastating impact of the pandemic has made UNHCR's focus on solutions and integration even more urgent and important.

- RICE Co. Hong Kong placed an order on crochet earrings to Archisha, a group of Afghan persons of concern artisans for an order of approximately USD 9,000.
- UNHCR partners provided microgrants to 16 Rohingya in Telangana, 18 persons of concern from Chin, Rohingya, and Afghan communities in Delhi, and skill development training to 115 refugees and asylum-seekers in garment stitching, paper bag making, and artisanal cloth work.
- In Mewat and Telangana, 103 individuals were provided guidance on labour market opportunities. 14 refugees and asylum-seekers in Delhi were selected in jobs related to hospitality, mechanic, call-centers, and UNHCR

volunteers.

- UNHCR assists refugees and asylum seekers in India with durable solutions, including resettlement to a third country, voluntary repatriation, and local integration. The cases of persons determined to be in need of international protection and meeting the resettlement criteria specified by countries are submitted or assisted for resettlement
- Eight individuals departed on complementary pathways in the month of August. 3 individuals departed to the USA, one individual to Sweden, one individual to France, 9 individuals to Germany, one individual to Canada, and 4 individuals departed to Ireland. Total departure on complementary pathways from January till August 2021 is 79 individuals.
- One individual departed to Somalia on voluntary repatriation till August 2021.



### Campaigns and working with partners

UNHCR's campaign to ensure community information is passed on to Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers in India resulted in 18 creatives shared across UNHCR Facebook, Instagram, and the help website reaching a total audience of 34,755 with 3,356 engagements.

- Mursal, an Afghan refugee from India is nominated as one of the 10 displaced people across the globe to be part of the UNHCR Journalist Mentorship programme for three months.
- Over 1,600 young artists from 100 countries designed their own "dream balls" to illustrate the power of sport to bring us all together. Nadira, an Afghan refugee in India was one of the winners and her #dreamball design focuses on the inclusion of sports.

**Thanks to donors in 2021:** USA | European Union | Canada | Private Donors Canada | UN COVID-19 MPTF and to our private donors:

We are also grateful to donors who provide unearmarked or softly earmarked contributions to UNHCR, which help support India operation and enable us to respond in a timely and flexible manner. These donors include Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Private donors Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

36% of UNHCR needs are still unmet. We rely on the generous support of countries, organizations, and private donors to meet the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers in the country. The COVID-19 pandemic in India has negatively impacted the socio-economic conditions for both refugees and host communities, and funding is urgently needed to provide life-sustaining assistance, including shelter, food, access to safe drinking water, remote education, and health services.

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