

# People's Republic of China

January 2021

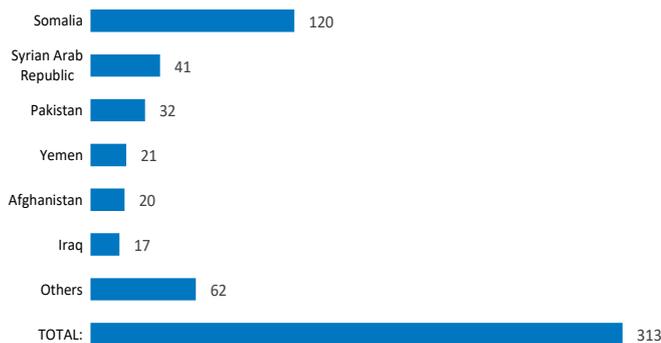
China settled 260,000 Indo-Chinese refugees in the late **1970s** and acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol in **1982**.

The **2013** Exit-Entry Administrative Law included provisions for refugees and asylum-seekers, pending implementation. Hong Kong SAR established the Unified Screening Mechanism (USM) in **2014**. China established the National Immigration Administration in **2018**.

Globally China has pledged support for refugees at the **2016** UN General Assembly, **2017** Belt & Road Forum, **2019** Global Refugee Forum and its **2020** Position Paper on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UN.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

### Refugees\* (by country of origin)



\*Figures as of January 2021 covering urban refugees in China's mainland only. There are additionally 303,106 Indo-Chinese refugees de facto integrated pending Government regularization. There are also 263 Persons of Concern to UNHCR in Hong Kong SAR.

## 2020 FUNDRAISING RESULTS

**USD 14.4 Million**

**Government: USD 1,765,630**

**Private: USD 12,606,346**

## UNHCR PRESENCE

### Staff:

25 National Staff  
4 International Staff  
27 Affiliate Staff

### Offices:

UNHCR China Country  
Office in Beijing  
Hong Kong Sub-Office in  
Hong Kong SAR



## Working with Partners

- In **China's mainland**, UNHCR works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Security and the National Immigration Administration, China International Development Cooperation Agency, China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges, Ministry of Emergency Management, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Civil Affairs, Ministry of Education and the China Scholarship Council. UNHCR is an active member of the UN China Country Team.
- In **Hong Kong SAR**, Government partners include the Security Bureau, Immigration Department and Social Welfare Department; operational partners include Christian Action Centre for Refugees, RUN HK, Branches of Hope, and Justice Centre Hong Kong as well as private partners including Daly & Associates and Clifford Chance LLP. In **Macao SAR**, Government partners include the Refugee Committee, Office of the Secretary for Administration and Justice, and Education and Youth Development Bureau; operational partners include Refugee Welfare Association and Caritas Macau.

## Main Activities

### Protection, Advocacy & Solutions

- In China's mainland, UNHCR ensures access to the right to seek asylum through registration, documentation and by performing Refugee Status Determination (RSD) in the absence of a national system. In Hong Kong SAR, the authorities conduct the Unified Screening Mechanism (USM) and UNHCR reviews substantiated claimants with a view to pursuing solutions for them, including resettlement, as well as other opportunities.
- In China's mainland, UNHCR actively engages with the National Immigration Administration on operational matters relating to refugee protection within China and offers its expertise in support of the development of relevant policies and laws. In Hong Kong SAR, UNHCR provides technical advice and training to support authorities' efforts in developing and implementing the USM in line with accepted international standards.
- In China's mainland, UNHCR provides limited direct financial support intended to cover essential food, shelter and health needs of nearly 85% of the refugee population in the absence of other providers of assistance. In Hong Kong SAR, the Social Welfare Department provides basic food and shelter to asylum-seekers and refugees delivered through a civil society organization and supplemented by private contributions. Asylum-seekers in Macao SAR are eligible for full social welfare assistance while their applications are pending, equal to Macao citizens. As UNHCR does not have a permanent physical presence in Macao, UNHCR partners with Caritas for practical assistance and signposting to asylum-seekers and refugees.
- UNHCR seeks solutions for refugees by pursuing opportunities for resettlement to third countries, while identifying and advocating for complementary pathways to access third countries through alternative safe and regulated avenues, including labour and education opportunities.

- With the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR has taken a flexible and innovative approach to its Protection-related services. UNHCR Beijing established a remote case management system to ensure that persons in need of international protection were able to seek asylum and were protected against refoulement. Refugees received additional cash assistance to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and in Hong Kong SAR, UNHCR provided PPE to persons of concern through partners. The Office collaborated closely with the Government to address protection risks and ensure that persons of concern could access health services and other basic necessities. UNHCR also strengthened remote communication to monitor and respond to individual needs of persons of concern and share health and safety tips in relevant languages.
- At the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019, China co-sponsored the high-level dialogue on Jobs and Livelihoods and 3 partners from the Hong Kong private sector pledged to enhance labour opportunities and legal aid to persons of concern.

#### **Awareness Raising & Resource Mobilisation**

- UNHCR works through traditional media, online platforms, social media, events and influencers to raise awareness about its work among the Chinese public. UNHCR has over 500,000 followers across its Weibo account, two WeChat accounts and a Hong Kong SAR Facebook account. For World Refugee Day the Office organises activities such as film festivals and photo exhibitions, and participates in major public events such as the Hong Kong book fair. UNHCR works with National Goodwill Ambassador, actress Yao Chen to raise awareness and generate empathy. Since 2013, she has undertaken field missions to the Philippines, Thailand, Ethiopia, Lebanon and Pakistan. In addition, UNHCR introduces youth to refugee issues through school and university lectures, virtual events and welcoming Chinese student groups to its offices to learn about UNHCR's work and career opportunities.
- At the 2016 UN General Assembly Summit on Refugees and Migrants, China pledged USD100 million under the China-UN Peace and Development Fund and USD300 million in bilateral and multilateral assistance at the Leaders' Summit to address the global refugee crisis. In its position paper on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN, China called on countries to support UNHCR and the effective implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees. In addition to its USD800,000 annual contribution to UNHCR, the Chinese Government has supported UNHCR field projects through the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Two new projects were agreed in 2020: to procure and deliver PPE to refugee-hosting areas in East Africa, and to support shelter and education in Afghanistan. China also funds the deployment of 7 Junior Professional Officers and will sponsor more than 10 interns to UNHCR's global operations. Macao SAR also funds the deployment of 3 paid interns.
- Over USD12 million in private funding was raised in China, including Hong Kong and Macao SARs through donations in 2020. UNHCR is also building support among the corporate sector, commercial chambers and foundations throughout China.
- UNHCR also conducts private sector outreach to publicize procurement opportunities and to further engage Chinese companies in its global supply and logistics operations.

### CONTACTS

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