UNHCR IN 2019

Mission
The High Commissioner for Refugees is mandated by the United Nations to lead and coordinate international action for the worldwide protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems. As of November 2019, 149 States are parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and/or to its 1967 Protocol.

UNHCR’s primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. In its efforts to achieve this objective, the Office strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, and to return home voluntarily. By assisting refugees to return to their own country or to settle permanently in another country, UNHCR also seeks lasting solutions to their plight.

UNHCR’s Executive Committee (106 Member States as of October 2019) and the UN General Assembly have authorized involvement with other groups. These include former refugees who have returned to their homeland, internally displaced people, and persons who are stateless or whose nationality is disputed.

As of December 2019, 94 States are parties to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and 74 to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

The Office seeks to reduce situations of forced displacement by encouraging States and other institutions to create conditions which are conducive to the protection of human rights and the peaceful resolution of disputes. In all of its activities, it pays particular attention to the needs of children and seeks to promote the equal rights of women and girls.

The Office carries out its work in collaboration with many partners, including governments, regional organizations, and international and non-governmental organizations. It is committed to the principle of participation, believing that refugees and others who benefit from the Office’s activities should be consulted over decisions which affect their lives.

Global presence
UNHCR is present in 130 countries and territories with offices in 507 locations.

Global workforce
- UNHCR workforce: 17,464
- Staff members: 12,833
- Affiliate workforce*: 4,631

Gender breakdowns of UNHCR workforce
- Male: 61%
- Female: 39%
- Volunteers: 27%

Global presence by region
- Africa: 38%
- Asia and the Pacific: 12%
- Middle East and North Africa: 20%
- The Americas: 15%
- Europe: 11%
- The Caribbean: 10%
- The Middle East: 9%

Global presence by category
- Field: 90%
- HQs: 10%
- National: 52%
- International: 21%
- Affiliate: 27%

GLOBAL WORKFORCE

STAFF MEMBERS

AFFILIATE WORKFORCE*

* UNVs, individual contractors and consultants hired through UNOPS or directly, deployees, secondees and interns.

** See footnote (6) in map of global populations of concern

People of concern to UNHCR worldwide

- 86.5M People of concern
- 4.1M Asylum-seekers pending cases
- 20.4M Refugees
- 4.2M Stateless persons*
- 5.7M Returnees (Refugees and IDPs)
- 43.5M IDPs

The largest numbers of pending cases were in
- The Americas: 1.9 million
- Europe: 12 million
- Africa: 529,800

Refugee populations by region of asylum
- 57% coming from three countries
- The Syrian Arab Republic: 6.4M
- Afghanistan: 2.7M
- South Sudan: 2.2M

811,000 formerly stateless individuals acquired a nationality or had their nationality confirmed in 26 countries

Stateless persons*
- 811,000

Returnees (Refugees and IDPs)
- Unresolved conflicts and insecurity in countries of origin presented major constraints for returns and their sustainability

Largest refugee returns
- South Sudan: 99,800
- Syria: 95,000
- Central African Republic: 46,500

Largest IDP returns
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo: 477,000
- Colombia: 1.3M
- Ethiopia: 2.1M
- Turkey: 6.1M

IDPs
- Many IDPs were in protracted situations characterized by critical protection and humanitarian challenges
- 44% were in three countries
**Key data and achievements in 2019**

**Core relief items**
- 7 global stockpiles used to deliver $30 million-worth of CRIs to 23 emergency-affected countries
- 8 emergency airlifts, fulfilling 122 requests

**Cash assistance**
- $650M distributed, 13% increase on 2018
- 100 operations implemented cash assistance
- 80% of cash assistance disbursed electronically

**Shelter**
- 15,198 refugee housing units deployed to 15 operations
- 86,426 households received cash grants for rental accommodation
- 116,527 people of concern received emergency shelter

**Building better futures**

**Resettlement**
- 1.4M refugees in need of resettlement
- 81,671 resettlement submissions to 29 countries
- 63,726 UNHCR-facilitated resettlement departures

**Education**
- Primary school: 63% of refugee children attend
- Secondary school: 24% of refugee children attend
- University: 3% of refugee youth attend

**Energy and environmental protection**
- 1M refugees accessed a sustainable source of cooking fuel
- 838,220 tons of CO₂ emissions reduced by using cleaner sources of energy
- 100 UNHCR offices conducted an environmental inventory

**Responding with lifesaving support**

**Emergencies**
- 6 new emergencies
- 3 IDP emergencies: Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cyclone Idai (Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe)
- 3 refugee emergencies: Costa Rica, Iraq, Niger

**Emergency deployments**
- 167 UNHCR emergency staff deployed
- 102 emergency standby partner staff deployed

**Legal protection frameworks**
- 16 states adopted laws and legislative changes improving refugee rights

**Statelessness**
- 81,074 individuals who were formerly stateless acquired a nationality or had their nationality confirmed

**Refugee status determination**
- 2.3M new and appeal asylum applications were registered globally, including 120,400 registered by UNHCR (5% of the total)

**Registration**
- 8.8M individual records biometrically registered in UNHCR’s Biometric Identity Management System across 69 countries

**PARTNERSHIPS**
- $1.376 allocated to partners
- 709 national NGOs
- 191 international NGOs
- 206 government partners
- 20 UN agencies
- 31% of global expenditure to partners

**FINAL BUDGET**
- $8.636
- $3.910 Funding gap 44%
- $4.826*
- Earmarked 21%
- Softly earmarked 7%
- Unearmarked 9%
- Tightly earmarked 18%

**CONTRIBUTIONS**
- $4.217
- Private donors 10%
- Governments and the European Union 87%
- UN Regular Budget 1%
- UN pooled funding and intergovernmental donors 2%
- Tightly earmarked 18%

**EXPENDITURE**
- $4.415
- Pillar 1 Refugees 82%
- Pillar 2 Stateless 1%
- Pillar 3 Returnees 3%
- Pillar 4 IDPs 15%
- Pillar 3 Stateless 1%

*Funds available: contributions (voluntary contributions and UN Regular Budget); carry-over; other income and adjustments

**Unearmarked**
- 44%

**Tightly earmarked**
- 18%

**Softly earmarked**
- 7%

**Unallocated**
- 9%