

# 2025 Impact Report

## Response to new emergencies and protracted crises



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# Executive Summary

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In 2025, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, responded to a complex mix of new emergencies and long-standing crises that forced millions of people from their homes. Teams around the world delivered life-saving protection and assistance, ensuring that people forced to flee received support even as unprecedented funding cuts and growing needs tested the limits of humanitarian response.

From providing swift humanitarian aid to people fleeing renewed violence in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo to neighbouring Burundi, to supporting those escaping fresh hostilities within and across South Sudan's borders; from extending protection to millions of Afghans forced to return from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, to delivering critical support to communities devastated by earthquakes in Afghanistan and Myanmar, UNHCR demonstrated steadfast commitment across diverse and overlapping crises.

Alongside new emergencies, protracted crises deepened, continuing to impact millions of displaced people. Long-running conflict in Sudan, intensified Russian attacks on Ukraine, and escalating armed confrontations in Colombia further compounded existing vulnerabilities and contributed to continuous population movements throughout the year.

By the end of June 2025 – the latest official data available – an estimated [117.3 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide](#), a five per cent decrease compared to the end of 2024. This decline reflects a sharp rise in returns of refugees and internally displaced people in some of the world's largest displacement situations, including voluntary returns, such as to the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria), as well as many that took place under adverse conditions, notably among Afghan, Congolese and Sudanese populations. However, displacement trends for the second half of 2025 suggest that total displacement figures will be higher at the end of the year.

Severe funding cuts affected every aspect of UNHCR's work, including emergency response, forcing the organization to reduce both the scale of its activities and its workforce by approximately one-third. While final account closures are still underway, contributions received in 2025 are expected to exceed \$3.5 billion, around \$1.4 billion (28 per cent) lower

than in 2024.<sup>1</sup> Despite prioritizing life-saving activities and working closely with hundreds of partners, including displaced communities themselves, these constraints significantly limited the scale of interventions at a time when humanitarian needs were rapidly expanding.

Over the course of the year, UNHCR managed 24 active emergency declarations across 16 countries, including 10 new emergencies and 14 crises continuing from the previous year. Of these, seven were classified as Level 1 emergencies, 10 as Level 2, and seven as Level 3 – the highest emergency designation. All Level 3 emergencies were protracted crises carried over from 2024, underscoring the severity and persistence of major emergencies, notably the conflict in Sudan and its regional spillover, as well as large-scale displacement linked to hostilities in Lebanon and Syria.

Africa remained the epicentre of displacement dynamics. UNHCR responded to emergencies in 12 countries across the continent, mainly driven by conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, and Sudan. Asia witnessed two new emergencies: one in Myanmar, where a powerful and deadly earthquake deepened the suffering of people already displaced by long-standing conflict; and another in Afghanistan, where mass forced returns from neighbouring countries converged with a devastating earthquake, further exacerbating humanitarian needs. In the Middle East, emergencies declared in late 2024 due to escalating hostilities in Lebanon and Syria continued into the first quarter of 2025, alongside significant returns of Syrians from abroad and from within the country to their areas of origin.

As global projections indicate that the number of forcibly displaced and stateless people could reach [136.3 million by the end of 2026](#), the need for international solidarity has reached a critical point. Without increased, timely and above all flexible funding, UNHCR's ability to respond rapidly at the onset of new crises and to sustain life-saving assistance for people forced to flee their homes will be severely constrained at a time when needs are escalating worldwide.

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<sup>1</sup> All financial figures cited in this report are as of 30 November 2025 and pending final account closures.

# Introduction

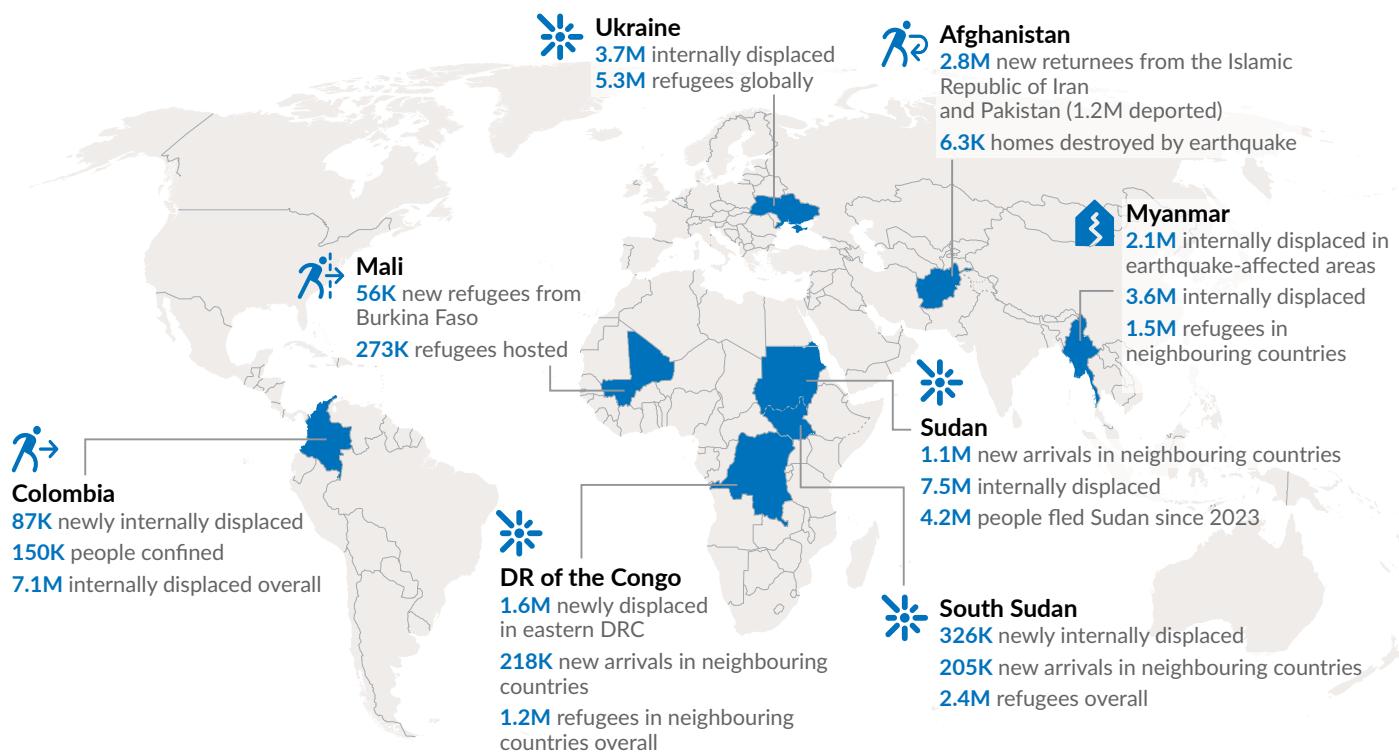
This report highlights UNHCR's humanitarian response throughout 2025, a year defined by severe cuts to humanitarian funding that intensified the suffering of millions of people displaced by deepening and unresolved conflicts as well as those who had no option but to return to their countries of origin under adverse conditions. Natural hazards and extreme weather events further exacerbated the vulnerabilities of already displaced populations.

UNHCR remained a steadfast presence worldwide, delivering life-saving assistance and protection across a wide range of emergencies and protracted displacement situations, despite the significant impact of funding cuts on its programmes and workforce.

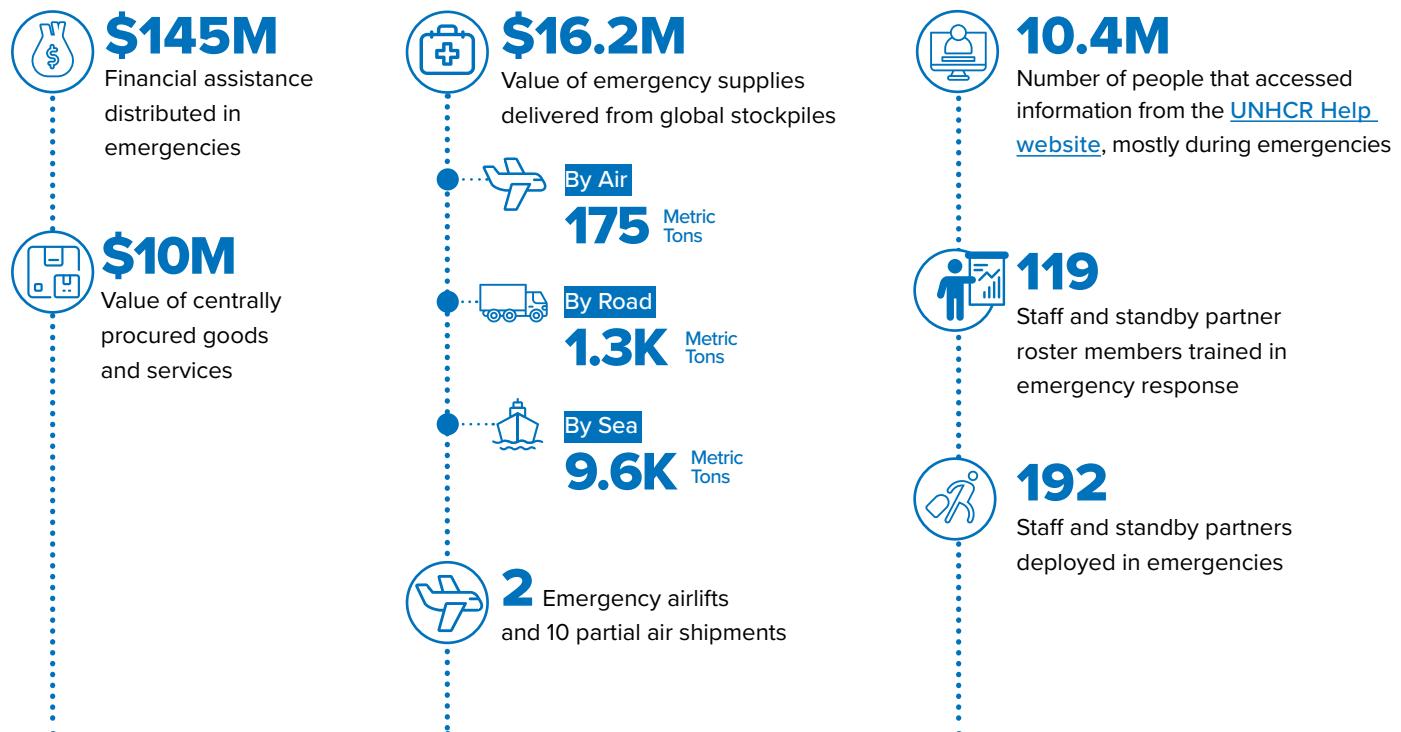
From responding to long-running and escalating conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, and Ukraine, to supporting people subjected to forced returns in Afghanistan; from assisting communities affected by earthquakes in Afghanistan and Myanmar, to protecting internally displaced and confined populations in Colombia; and from responding to instability and violence in Burkina Faso and Mali, UNHCR worked throughout 2025 to protect and support millions of forcibly displaced people.

## Emergencies in 2025

### Impact of new emergencies and major protracted crises in 2025

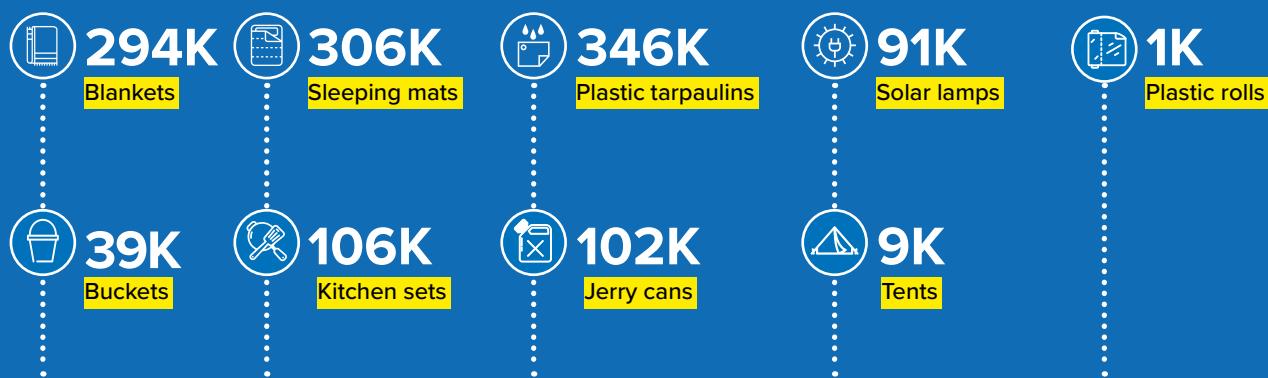


## KEY FIGURES\*



## EMERGENCY ITEMS SUPPLIED IN 2025

(GLOBAL STOCKPILES)



Up to **1.6M** people served

## In 2025, UNHCR emergency assistance included:

**480K**

returnees in  
Afghanistan provided  
with financial aid

**>20K**

refugees registered in  
Mali, enabling access  
to further assistance

**> 185K**

refugees relocated from  
border areas to refugee  
settlements in Chad

**40K**

internally displaced  
or confined people  
in Colombia received  
relief items

**150K**

earthquake survivors  
provided with relief  
items in Myanmar

**> 1.1M**

multi-sectoral services  
for internally displaced  
people in Ukraine

**>50K**

refugees relocated  
from border areas to a  
new site in Burundi

**3K**

internally displaced  
families provided  
with relief items in  
South Sudan

**116K**

returnees received  
financial aid in Syria

**498K**

people received  
treated water in Sudan

# Emergency response in 2025

## Afghanistan: converging crises of mass returns and natural hazards



Afghan families at Torkham border return from Pakistan amid mass deportations, ready to rebuild their lives despite uncertainty. © UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production

### Situation overview

In 2025, [Afghanistan](#) faced overlapping crises that deepened the vulnerabilities and sharply increased protection needs. Mass returns from neighbouring countries – many under duress – combined with devastating natural hazards to create a complex emergency.

Return movements surged throughout the year, with major waves in April and September from Pakistan and in June from the Islamic Republic of Iran, following government orders. Pakistan's expanded repatriation plan targeted all Afghans, including Proof of Registration card holders, accelerating departures – often involuntary. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the expiry of Headcount Slips and a new regularization scheme left over 2 million Afghans at risk of deportation. Arbitrary deportations in Tajikistan – including of recognized refugees – added to uncertainty.

Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan escalated in the second half of the year, with border closures disrupting humanitarian access. Pakistan further pressured Afghan refugees to return by de-notifying refugee villages – home to 30 per cent of Afghans – and closing services.

Natural hazards compounded the crisis. From 31 August to 1 September earthquakes in northeastern provinces killed over 2,200 people, injuring 3,600 others and destroyed 6,300 homes. Another quake struck Mazar-i-Sharif on 3 November, affecting 3,000 families.

These developments, compounded by a deteriorating human rights environment and economic downturn, pushed public services to the brink of collapse. Humanitarian operations were further constrained by new restrictions imposed by Afghanistan's de facto authorities, including a nationwide ban on female national staff working in UN premises.

By year's end, over 2.8 million Afghans had returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, including some 1.4

million deported, while 4.3 million refugees and asylum-seekers remained across the region, underscoring the scale of the protection crisis.

### Response

In 2025, UNHCR continued biometrically processing returnees and providing financial aid to 480,000 people in refugee or refugee-like situations in Afghanistan, helping alleviate hardships for those returning under pressure. Between August and November, nearly 415,000 returnees from Pakistan received transportation, core relief items, emergency shelter materials and civil documentation – including 115,000 in November alone.

UNHCR maintained protection monitoring for Afghan communities in neighbouring countries. In Pakistan, the helpline responded to 130,000 calls, providing information, advice and referrals, while legal assistance and counselling reached 99,000 people.

As returns peaked in the Islamic Republic of Iran during the Iran–Israel conflict in June, UNHCR delivered core relief items at Milak border, including 18,000 sleeping mats, 5,000 blankets and two rub halls, in coordination with partners and national authorities.

UNHCR's emergency response also addressed natural hazards. After the 31 August earthquake, UNHCR and partners distributed 13,500 relief items to 34,000 people across nine villages in Kunar. Following the 3 November quake in Mazar-i-

Sharif, assistance included 345 blankets, 230 jerrycans, 115 gas cookers, 230 tarpaulins and 230 solar lamps, alongside food and medical support.

Beyond operational efforts, UNHCR updated its [Guidance Note on Afghanistan and continues to urge](#) all countries to allow civilians fleeing Afghanistan access to their territory, uphold the right to seek asylum and respect the principle of non-refoulement.

### Funding

UNHCR's operation in Afghanistan was 49 per cent funded in 2025, with \$105.4 million received out of the \$216.6 required for the year. UNHCR's broader response to the Afghanistan situation was funded at 37 per cent, with \$176.6 million received out of the \$478.4 million required for the year. Meanwhile, the inter-agency Regional Refugee Response Plan for the Afghanistan situation was 22 per cent funded, with \$137 million received out of the \$622 million required for the year.

#### Impact of funding cuts



Protection services for **3.3 million people**, including **1.6 million children**, came to a halt, including access to case management, psychosocial support, explosive ordnance risk education, and critical financial aid.

## “We lost everything in one night”: Samiullah’s story



Samiullah, 43, a resident of Mazardara village, Kunar province affected by the 31 August earthquake, sits among the ruins of his home and community. © UNHCR/Oxygen Media Empire

When the ground shook in the dead of night, Samiullah’s life changed forever. In Mazardara village, Kunar province, a powerful earthquake reduced homes to rubble and shattered lives.

“My name is Samiullah,” he says softly, standing among the ruins of his family home. “By the will of God, an earthquake struck around midnight. It was so strong that no one could save themselves.”

In seconds, Samiullah lost his son (a teacher), his daughter, daughter-in-law and grandchild. His livestock, the cows and sheep that sustained his family, were buried under debris. Next door, his brother’s house collapsed, killing six brothers, two nephews and a sister-in-law. His cousin’s family suffered the same fate. Sixteen members of his extended family died that night; eight more were injured.

Across the area, devastation was staggering. “Around 120 people died,” Samiullah says. “Everyone is busy with their own grief.”

For Samiullah, the loss is total: loved ones, homes, roads, crops and livestock. “We need shelter because our houses are destroyed,” he pleads. “We have no place to live. We need food for our children. We need tents. Last night it rained, and the children were under the rain. Our road is destroyed; no one can come or go.”

His words echo the urgent needs of hundreds of families in Kunar: shelter, food, safe relocation and a chance to rebuild far from the memories of that night. “May God have mercy,” he says quietly. “May a life be built for us.”

## Internal displacement and confinement in Colombia



During the first months of 2025, UNHCR Colombia deployed its staff to strategic reception points in the city of Cúcuta, to respond to the largest mass displacement that has occurred in the country, generated by armed clashes in the Catatumbo region. @ UNHCR

### Situation overview

In 2025, Colombia's humanitarian crisis deepened due to intensified armed conflict, rising forced displacement, and confinements imposed on entire communities by non-state armed groups. Between January and October, 111 mass displacements affected 87,000 people – an 88 per cent increase compared to 2024 – while 150,000 people were confined, up 67 per cent from last year. The most affected departments included Norte de Santander, Bolívar, Antioquia, Chocó, Cauca, Nariño, Guaviare and Caquetá.

The Catatumbo region in Norte de Santander, bordering Venezuela, experienced the largest displacement ever recorded in Colombia. In the first 10 months of 2025, over 114,200 people were registered as internally displaced, while 17,800 were confined. Most fled to Cúcuta, Ocaña and Tibú, while confinement was widespread in municipalities such as Ábrego, El Tarra, Hacarí, San Calixto, Teorama and Tibú. Communities there faced severe movement restrictions, disrupted livelihoods, and limited access to food, health care and education.

Children and youth were disproportionately affected. In Cúcuta and Catatumbo, the risk of child recruitment by armed groups exceeded 95 per cent in 2025, including Venezuelan children. Lack of documentation, education and livelihoods heightened

vulnerability. At least 60 cases of child recruitment were reported in Norte de Santander in the first half of the year, though underreporting persisted. Confinement prolonged school closures, worsened malnutrition and increased psychosocial distress, especially among Indigenous Barí and Yukpa. Social leaders faced systematic threats, while insecurity restricted humanitarian access.

By December, there were nearly 10 million forcibly displaced people in Colombia, including 7.1 million internally displaced people, 2.8 million Venezuelans and 18,000 individuals in reverse flows from north to south.

### Response

In response to the escalating crisis in Catatumbo, UNHCR mobilized humanitarian assistance, deployed field teams, and provided technical guidance to strengthen state responses and coordinate protection efforts.

Through one fixed and one mobile Information and Orientation Centre (PAO) in Norte de Santander, UNHCR delivered information, counselling and referrals to 8,000 people. In partnership with university-run legal clinics, over 1,700 people accessed legal assistance and were included in the Registro

Único de Víctimas (RUV), with mobile brigades extending services to remote, high-risk areas.

UNHCR distributed 42,600 relief items – including hygiene kits, mattresses and blankets – to 40,000 people in Cúcuta, El Tarra, Ocaña, Sardinata and Tibú. The agency also collaborated with local authorities to develop temporary shelter strategies and monitor conditions, including a women and children's shelter in Ocaña. Casa de la Misericordia, a safe house, provided accommodation and psychosocial support to 190 internally displaced people, including 72 gender-based violence survivors. Additionally, 1,200 children and adolescents participated in child-friendly spaces under the ADN PAZ methodology, (DNA of peace), promoting resilience, life planning and alternatives to violence.

UNHCR supported the Constitutional Court's follow-up on Catatumbo, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of impacts on displaced and confined communities and promoting preventive measures. Despite insecurity and restricted access,

coordinated support through the UNHCR-led local coordination team helped mitigate the impact of funding cuts and reduced field presence.

### Funding

UNHCR's operation in Colombia was funded at 27 per cent in 2025, with \$31.9 million received out of the \$118.3 million required for the year.

#### Impact of funding cuts



UNHCR was forced to reduce its network of support centres (Puntos de Atención y Orientación) from **75** to **15**, sharply limiting access to vital information on rights, documentation and legal stay. In Catatumbo, more than **63,000** newly displaced people were left without basic relief items such as mattresses, hygiene kits and mosquito nets

## Renewed conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo



Thousands of civilians from eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have crossed into Burundi, fleeing intense fighting in South Kivu. © UNHCR/Bernard Ntwari

### Situation overview

Renewed fighting in eastern [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) (DRC) escalated first in January and then again in December, sharply worsening the humanitarian situation and triggering mass displacement. More than 1.6 million people were newly displaced within the country, while 218,000 fled to neighbouring countries – primarily Burundi and Uganda – with smaller numbers reaching Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

The heavy presence of armed actors across North and South Kivu created an extremely insecure environment, leaving civilians caught in hostilities, subjected to human rights violations and exposed to exploitation. Rape and other forms of sexual violence continued to be systematically used as a weapon of war. Widespread destruction further devastated daily life; homes, schools and health centres were destroyed, farmland and markets disrupted, and access to clean water, health care, hygiene and livelihoods severely diminished.

Despite the Washington Accords signed between the DRC and Rwanda on 27 June 2025 and then reaffirmed on 4 December, clashes between armed groups and attacks on civilians persisted, hindering humanitarian access.

By year's end, more than 5.3 million people were internally displaced across the DRC, including 3.6 million in the east, alongside over 500,000 refugees hosted by the DRC. Despite damaged infrastructure and limited services, more than 1 million Congolese returned to Goma and surrounding areas. Meanwhile, over 1.2 million Congolese refugees remained in neighbouring countries, mostly in Uganda (644,000) and Burundi (113,000).

### Response

Despite significant operational challenges, UNHCR and partners continued delivering protection and life-saving assistance in eastern DRC and neighbouring countries.

In eastern DRC, UNHCR expanded financial aid for families displaced from Lubero to Beni, enabling 27,500 people to cover essential expenses such as basic household items, rent and education. Shelter support and core relief items reached 33,000 people displaced by renewed fighting, including 19,900 in North Kivu and 14,500 in South Kivu. Awareness sessions on peaceful coexistence and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse engaged 13,200 people, while 65,800 returnees participated in community sessions on gender-based violence and sexual health. Another 38,700 individuals joined activities led by women's groups and ambassadors.

In Burundi, approximately 96,000 people arrived from eastern DRC in the first three weeks of December, following earlier arrivals in February when over 71,000 people fled to Burundi, some of whom later returned. In response to the latest influx, a new site at Bweru was established immediately at the Government's request, with over 50,000 people transferred there in December from temporary sites and transit centres. Following the earlier influx, UNHCR had expanded Musenyi settlement and delivered protection services, including support for survivors of violence, child-focused care, education and emergency financial aid.

In Uganda, the response to the influx earlier in the year – 67,000 arrivals by June and a further 11,000 in the second half of 2025 – combined border screening, registration and protection assessments with rapid referrals for those with specific needs. Around 41,000 severely malnourished children and approximately 19,000 pregnant or breastfeeding women were supported through health facilities. By the end of the year, more than 57,000 new arrivals from DRC were relocated to Nakivale settlement, where temporary shelters and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities were set up despite limited water supply. Protection services were strengthened, identifying and referring over 12,000 at-risk children and other groups with specific needs to specialized services, while coordination with authorities and communities enhanced basic services and promoted peaceful coexistence.

## Funding

UNHCR's operation in the DRC was 29 per cent funded in 2025, with \$68.9 million received out of the \$235.5 million required for the year. UNHCR's broader response to the DRC situation was funded at 33 per cent, with \$103.6 million received out of the \$312.9 million required for the year. Meanwhile, the inter-agency Regional Refugee Response Plan for the DRC situation was 18 per cent funded, with \$142 million received out of the \$773.2 million required for the year.

### Impact of funding cuts



Inside the DRC, shelter assistance for internally displaced people has been reduced by **70 per cent**, leaving thousands without a safe place to live. In Burundi, **70,000** newly arrived refugees remain without shelter, while child protection services, support for survivors of gender-based violence and access to legal aid have been drastically curtailed.

## Importance of flexible funding

Flexible funding enables UNHCR to prepare for the unpredictable, launch emergency responses quickly and support displaced populations in underfunded or forgotten crises. It ensures efficient planning and resource management, saving and transforming lives.

Without flexible funding, UNHCR cannot adequately prepare for new emergencies. The critical first phase – delivering relief items, emergency shelter and protection services – would face significant delays.

Flexible contributions are also vital for sustaining longer-term support. When emergencies fade from public attention, they ensure continued assistance to those who remain most in need.

## Increasing arrivals from Burkina Faso amid escalating crisis in Mali



A Burkinabe refugee searches for her belongings after arriving in Mali, fleeing violence in Burkina Faso's Sourou province. © UNHCR/Ibrahima Diane

### Situation overview

In 2025, Mali experienced a sudden influx of refugees from Burkina Faso, while worsening insecurity and economic decline heightened risk of onward movements, with small numbers already arriving in Mauritania late in the year.

In August, violence by terrorist groups in Burkina Faso triggered a sharp rise in arrivals in Mali's Koro area (Bandiagara region), reaching 56,000 by year's end, including 17,000 in August alone. This rapid influx overwhelmed fragile local services, forcing refugees into overcrowded classrooms, makeshift shelters, or host families.

Health facilities faced severe shortages of electricity, medical supplies, and malnutrition treatment. Water, sanitation and hygiene services remained critically insufficient, alongside urgent needs for food, essential items and energy. Meanwhile, escalating attacks on industries, fuel convoys and security forces deepened instability in southern Mali, increasing displacement risks across the Central Sahel.

Nearly 6,000 Malian arrivals were recorded in Mauritania's Hodh Chargui region between October and early December, mostly via informal crossing, although the Fassala-Mégve axis remained the main corridor. Families reported insecurity, intimidation by armed groups and disruptions linked to incidents around Léré. Approximately one-third of the new arrivals had previously lived in M'Bera refugee camp in Mauritania before going back to Mali, and have now returned again to Mauritania. Women and children made up the majority of arrivals in 2025, facing heightened protection risks, including family separation and child protection concerns. New arrivals began settling in multiple villages, placing additional strain on host communities already facing critical shortages of shelter, water, and essential supplies.

By year's end, Mali hosted over 273,000 refugees, including 123,000 from Burkina Faso, alongside 400,000 internally displaced people.

### Response

UNHCR and partners launched an emergency response in Mali, including registration, documentation, distribution of essential items, emergency shelters, and water, sanitation and hygiene services. Over 20,000 individuals were registered, enabling access to identity documents and assistance.

To ease pressure on schools, UNHCR began constructing 200 temporary shelters in Koro in September, allowing classrooms to reopen. Essential items including blankets, kitchen sets, mosquito nets and hygiene supplies were distributed to 2,000 families, while school-aged refugee children were identified for enrollment in the Malian education system.

In neighbouring Mauritania, UNHCR updated its contingency planning and prioritized assistance for new arrivals. Shelter and essential items were distributed in Kindjerlé, Douenkara and Djigueni, reaching 75 per cent of newly arrived families. Border and protection monitoring were reinforced and, in coordination with authorities, UNHCR continued to address urgent needs in dispersed locations. However, significant gaps remained in health services – particularly for those with chronic conditions – and in water, hygiene and sanitation across villages.

### Funding

UNHCR's operation in Mali was funded at 33 per cent in 2025, with \$28.3 million received out of the \$85.5 million required for the year.

#### Impact of funding cuts

Education has come to a halt for **11,500** children, while **13,000** families have lost access to financial aid and **11,000** young people can no longer benefit from livelihood programmes.



## Earthquake in Myanmar



U Than Win's youngest daughter and injured grandson shelter in a schoolyard after Myanmar's 28 March earthquake – having lost everything again, just two years after fleeing conflict near Mandalay. © UNHCR

### Situation overview

On 28 March, a 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck central [Myanmar](#), followed shortly by a 6.7 aftershock, causing severe loss of life and widespread destruction. The epicentre was near Sagaing and Mandalay – areas already hosting large numbers of internally displaced people – with damage also extending to Nay Pyi Taw, Bago and southern Shan State.

The human and structural toll was devastating. More than 3,800 people were killed and over 5,100 injured. An estimated 17.2 million people were living in the affected areas when the earthquake hit, including 2.1 million already displaced by conflict and pushed into even greater vulnerability. Assessments by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance and Myanmar's Department of Disaster Management found that nearly 12,000 homes were destroyed and more than 40,000 partially damaged. Public services and community structures were also severely impacted, with close to 2,600 schools, 700 hospitals, 14,000 religious buildings and almost 10,000 offices and other facilities damaged.

The disaster unfolded amid a deepening humanitarian crisis driven by nearly five years of conflict following the February 2021 military takeover. By year's end, over 3.6 million people were internally displaced – including 3.3 million since February 2021 – while access for aid agencies remained heavily constrained.

Beyond Myanmar's borders, some 1.5 million people from Myanmar were seeking asylum or living as refugees in neighbouring countries by year's end, including 1.1 million in Bangladesh alone. Harsh living conditions, coupled with funding shortfalls and limited legal pathways, continued to drive some to attempt dangerous sea and land journeys, leaving many at heightened risk of trafficking, particularly women and children.

### Response

UNHCR rapidly mobilized emergency assistance across Mandalay, Sagaing, Bago, Nay Pyi Taw and southern Shan State, reaching more than 244,000 earthquake survivors, many of whom had already been displaced by conflict. This included 160,900 people in Mandalay and Sagaing, 27,300 in Nay Pyi Taw and 55,800 in southeastern Myanmar.

To accelerate the response, a UNHCR-chartered flight supported by the Dubai Humanitarian Airbridge delivered over 40,000 kg of family tents and relief items to Yangon within two weeks of the earthquake, providing immediate support to up to 16,000 people. This airlift complemented wider logistics efforts: UNHCR dispatched trucks from Yangon and organized four additional airlifts and three sea shipments to move relief items into the hardest-hit areas.

As part of the response, UNHCR provided shelter assistance to 30,800 people through repair materials and temporary structures. More than 150,700 people received essential household items such as blankets, sleeping mats, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, buckets and solar lamps. A further 62,000 people received targeted assistance to meet urgent housing, food and medical needs.

In parallel, UNHCR, as lead of the Protection Cluster, coordinated efforts to address the heightened risks facing women, children, older people and persons with disabilities. This included protection assessments, partner training and community outreach on gender-based violence and child protection, ensuring that emergency relief was complemented by sustained protection support.

## Funding

UNHCR's operation in Myanmar was funded at 35 per cent in 2025, with \$30.7 million received out of the \$88.3 million required for the year. Additionally, UNHCR's broader response to the Myanmar situation was 41 per cent funded in 2025, with \$156.9 million received of the \$383.1 million required for the year.

### Impact of funding cuts



Shelter and financial assistance were limited to those with specific needs, leaving **300,000** people in Rakhine and Kachin States without emergency shelter and around **200,000** without minimal livelihood support.

## Syrian Arabic Republic: from emergency to return

Syria stands at a pivotal moment. Since the fall of the Bashar al-Assad Government on 8 December 2024, over 1.2 million Syrians have returned from abroad, while 1.9 million internally displaced people have gone back to their areas of origin. These movements signal hope for a transition from emergency to recovery, yet the context remains extremely fragile.

Years of conflict have caused widespread destruction, weakened essential services, limited livelihoods and left security volatile. With over 7 million Syrians still displaced inside the country and 4.5 million in neighbouring countries, large-scale international investment and stabilization support are urgently needed to ensure sustainable returns and prevent the collapse of refugee programmes in host countries.

With over three decades of presence in Syria, UNHCR supports returnees through financial and transportation assistance, home repairs, core relief items, civil documentation and protection services, including gender-based violence prevention and mental health support. Working with 23 partners across all 14 governorates, UNHCR aims to foster a protective environment and promote self-reliance.

Inside Syria, UNHCR and partners provided border assistance to 22,000 individuals, financial aid to 116,000, shelter support and core relief items to more than 820,000 people, livelihoods assistance for 5,000 individuals and legal registration for more than 15,000 people. In neighbouring countries, UNHCR provided legal and protection counselling, transportation and cash grants. By November, more than 45,000 Syrians returned through the facilitated Voluntary Return programme in Lebanon, while over 10,000 returned from Jordan. More than 21,000 individuals in both countries received financial aid.



Syrian refugees in Türkiye prepare to cross the Cilvegözü–Bab Al-Hawa border, returning home to Syria as part of a voluntary repatriation process. © UNHCR/Emrah Gürel

For the first time in fourteen years, Syrians have hope. Yet this transition remains fragile. The gains achieved through years of sustained support are increasingly at risk as severe funding cuts have forced difficult choices. Inside Syria, 52 of 122 community centres have closed, cutting off protection services for 500,000 people. In neighbouring countries, an estimated 347,000 refugees in Lebanon and 60,000 in Jordan lost access to financial aid. Sustained international engagement is essential to help families rebuild and move from crisis to recovery.

## Escalation of conflict in South Sudan



Newly arrived South Sudanese refugees crowd Tormorok, awaiting registration and relocation to Luakdong in Ethiopia's Gambella region, as makeshift shelters fill the temporary site and aid teams rush to assist. © UNHCR/Reath Rick Thot

### Situation overview

Renewed fighting erupted in February between government and opposition groups across Upper Nile State – particularly Nasir, Ulang and Bari Counties – and Fangak County in Jonglei, later spreading to other regions. Violence, fueled by political tensions and compounded by the war in Sudan, triggered mass displacement within South Sudan and into neighbouring countries.

In May, airstrikes on hospitals in Old Fangak, Nasir and Ulang killed civilians, destroyed medical supplies and suspended health services for over 100,000 people, forcing humanitarian staff to withdraw. Sporadic clashes also occurred in Central and Western Equatoria.

Between February and December, 326,000 people were newly displaced internally, while 205,000 fled to neighbouring countries, including 76,000 to Sudan, 45,000 to the Democratic Republic of Congo, 50,000 to Ethiopia and 34,000 to Uganda. Meanwhile, arrivals from Sudan continued with 300,000 in 2025 alone and 1.3 million since April 2023, straining resources amid political instability, economic crisis and climate shocks.

By year's end, there were 595,000 refugees and over 2 million internally displaced people in [South Sudan](#), while 2.4 million South Sudanese refugees lived in neighbouring countries, mostly in Uganda.

### Response

In South Sudan, UNHCR responded to displacement across Upper Nile, Jonglei and Unity despite severe access constraints. Vulnerability assessments identified high-risk groups, and 3,000 families received essential items, including blankets, tarpaulins, kitchen sets, jerrycans, sleeping mats and buckets. Financial aid for protection reached 1,900 people with specific needs in Upper Nile and Jonglei.

Across neighbouring countries, UNHCR strengthened border monitoring and expanded reception and accommodation capacity, while providing protection services and humanitarian assistance to new arrivals. In Ethiopia, UNHCR expanded reception capacity and distributed core relief items at sites including Moun, Matar and Luakdong, where 21,000 refugees were relocated and 1,000 upgradeable shelters built alongside water pipelines and permanent health facilities.

In Uganda, new arrivals received medical screening, hot meals, temporary shelter, and relief items such as blankets, soap and solar lamps. Water trucking and repairs to solar pumps addressed shortages in Bidibidi settlement and Rhino Camp.

In Sudan, UNHCR maintained 10 water systems and trucked water for 497,000 people in White Nile, while chlorinating water yards for more than 32,000 people in South and West Kordofan. Additionally, the monthly water voucher system continued in Ghebeish (West Kordofan) and Tayiba (North Kordofan), supporting about 5,000 people.

### Funding

UNHCR's operation in South Sudan was 38 per cent funded in 2025, with \$112.1 million received out of the \$298.7 million required for the year. UNHCR's broader response to the South Sudan situation was funded at 27 per cent, with \$131.3 million received out of the \$491.5 million required for the year. Meanwhile, the inter-agency Regional Refugee Response Plan for the South Sudan situation was 22 per cent funded, with \$266 million received out of the \$1.2 billion required for the year.

### Impact of funding cuts



Inside South Sudan, three out of four safe spaces for women and girls were forced to close, leaving up to **80,000** survivors and at-risk women without access to life-saving medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, or opportunities to earn an income. In Ethiopia, the closure of four health centres meant that by year-end there was only one health centre per **35,000** people, far below minimum standards.

## Sudan's unabated conflict and worsening crisis



Newly displaced families in Tawila, Sudan, wait to receive plastic sheets from UNHCR partner Africa Humanitarian Action, after fleeing El Fasher.  
© UNHCR/Mohammad Jalal

### Situation overview

The conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) continued unabated in 2025, driving widespread destruction, civilian casualties and mass displacement. Over 1.1 million people fled to neighbouring countries this year.

In late October, the RSF seized El Fasher after a 500-day siege, forcing tens of thousands to flee and leaving many others trapped inside the city. Attacks on displacement sites and hospitals marked the violence. Within days, 100,000 people fled El Fasher, with thousands arriving in Tawila and Khazan Jedid and hundreds reaching Al Dabbah. Newly arrived families reported severe violence and rights abuses.

Despite ceasefire agreements in November, clashes persisted across Darfur and Kordofan, pushing more people toward White Nile State and increasing refugee flows into South Sudan. Cholera further compounded the crisis, with 122,000 cases and over 3,400 deaths reported since July 2024, including 93 refugee cases and four deaths.

By year's end, 11.9 million of the 14 million people forced to flee since April 2023 remained displaced, including 7.5 million internally and 4.2 million across borders. Despite the conflict, Sudan still hosted 900,000 refugees and asylum-seekers and saw the return of 2.6 million internally displaced people and refugees in 2025, though most return areas remain devastated.

### Response

In response to the crisis following the fall of El Fasher, UNHCR and partners provided life-saving assistance across Darfur and Kordofan, deploying teams for protection monitoring and referrals for survivors of sexual violence, as well as for unaccompanied and separated children. New protection desks at Tawila's Daba Naira and Dali camps provided psychological first aid, family tracing and medical referrals for survivors of gender-based violence. UNHCR supplied 50 post-exposure prophylaxis kits, distributed over 1,200 plastic sheets and provided family tents to 35 refugee families.

As Protection Cluster lead, UNHCR coordinated with 30 partners on emergency planning and response across Darfur and Kordofan.

Cholera response reached 498,000 people in White Nile with treated water, supported 12,100 in Blue Nile, engaged 27,000 refugees with hygiene promotion activities and provided hygiene kits to 16,800 refugees.

In Chad, where 173,000 new arrivals joined nearly 896,000 refugees since April 2023, UNHCR expanded sites and relocated 185,000 from border areas to camps in Ennedi Est, Wadi Fira and Ouaddai, while another 200,000 awaited relocation by year's end. A newly established site in Marassabré, Wadi Fira, was hosting over 29,000 refugees by the end of 2025.

Protection and humanitarian assistance continued across other neighbouring countries, where many refugees still lack essential services and live below emergency standards.

## Funding

UNHCR's operation in Sudan was 29 per cent funded in 2025, with \$118.9 million received out of \$416.7 million required for the year. UNHCR's broader response to the Sudan situation was funded at 37 per cent, with \$411.8 million received out of the \$1.1 billion required for the year. Meanwhile, the inter-agency Regional Refugee Response Plan for the Sudan situation was 24 per cent funded, with \$431 million received out of the \$1.8 billion required for the year.

## Impact of funding cuts

Inside Sudan, access to primary health care, mental health services, and essential medicines, vaccines and medical supplies was severely disrupted for **380,000** people. In Chad, **55,000** families were unable to access adequate shelter by year's end and health and education services were stretched far beyond capacity, with one health centre serving up to **70,000** refugees and classrooms holding 50-100 children.



## Monira's journey: a struggle for water and hope



Monira Bahraldin fled from Al Fasher, Sudan, in June 2023 and has been living in Farchana refugee settlement in Chad ever since. © UNHCR/Ala Kheir

When violence engulfed her hometown of El Fasher, Sudan, in June 2023, Monira Bahraldin had no choice but to flee. Carrying only what she could, she crossed into Chad and found refuge in Farchana settlement – a place of safety, but not without hardship.

"Life in the camp has always been difficult," Monira says softly. "But the water shortage is especially hard. We spend hours queuing and sometimes an entire week passes without a single drop. In those times, we're forced to dig water from a nearby wadi. It's not clean and we have no chlorine to purify it. We try to boil it, but it's never enough. We desperately need safe water."

Monira's story is one of thousands. The recent violence in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, triggered another wave of killing, destruction and displacement in Sudan's brutal civil conflict. After two and a half years of fighting, Sudan faces the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with nearly 12 million people forced to flee their homes.

Tens of thousands fleeing the latest violence in North Darfur headed toward Chad, the nearest sanctuary. And while they escaped bombs and bullets, survival remains a daily struggle.

## Ongoing international armed conflict in Ukraine



A devastating overnight aerial attack on Kyiv (27–28 August) killed 25 civilians, including four children and injured many more. © UNHCR/Dmytro Babenko

### Situation overview

In 2025, the Russian Federation intensified attacks on [Ukraine](#), causing extensive destruction, civilian casualties and new displacement as the full-scale war entered its fourth year.

In the second half of the year, massive missile and drone strikes targeted energy and transport infrastructure, resulting in prolonged blackouts, water shortages, supply chain disruptions and further civilian harm. As security deteriorated, displacement continued from frontline communities, with many evacuees highly vulnerable, including older people and people with disabilities under mandatory evacuation orders.

Despite the ongoing international armed conflict, one million refugees and internally displaced people have returned to Ukraine since 2022, most during late 2022. However, persistent airstrikes, mine contamination, damaged housing, overstretched

services and significant humanitarian needs continued to hinder sustainable return. UNHCR does not promote or incentivize returns and its [Position on Voluntary Return to Ukraine](#) (June 2023) remains valid, emphasizing that all returns must be voluntary and well-informed.

Between January and October 2025, EUROSTAT recorded 565,000 decisions granting Temporary Protection to Ukrainians in EU+ countries<sup>2</sup> – 14 per cent decrease compared to 2024 – alongside 400 new asylum applications. Inside Ukraine, 260,000 people were newly internally displaced between January and September – half the number recorded in 2024.<sup>3</sup>

By year's end, 3.7 million people remained internally displaced, while 5.9 million were refugees worldwide, including 5.3 million across Europe.

<sup>2</sup> EU+ countries comprise 27 countries that are part of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) and four countries that are part of the European Economic Area and the Schengen Area (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland).

<sup>3</sup> IDP figures may include people experiencing secondary displacement and returning refugees temporarily displaced within Ukraine. Refugee figures may reflect re-applications, re-activations, or applications in multiple countries, not only new arrivals.

## Response

UNHCR focused on providing life-saving assistance to people in frontline areas and those affected by airstrikes, while mitigating protection risks and helping internally displaced people and returnees rebuild their lives. From January to November, UNHCR and partners delivered over 1.1 million services across sectors and provided financial aid to more than 215,000 people, covering essential needs such as shelter, food, medicine, clothing, and heating.

To help people stay warm during the winter of 2025, UNHCR provided financial aid, shelter and housing support and in-kind energy assistance, working in close coordination with the Government of Ukraine and partners under the inter-agency winter response plan. By the end of November, 176,000 people had received financial aid for winter needs, with a focus on vulnerable, war-affected people living near the frontlines and border areas.

In refugee-hosting countries, UNHCR's response continued to shift from emergency aid to promoting social cohesion, resilience, self-reliance and inclusion of refugees in national systems, ensuring long-term stability and support.

## Funding update

UNHCR's operation in Ukraine was 44 per cent funded in 2025, with \$243 million received out of the \$550 million required for the year. UNHCR's broader response to the Ukraine situation was also 44 per cent funded, with \$347.5 million received out of the \$804.3 million needed for the year. Meanwhile, the inter-agency [Regional Refugee Response Plan](#) for the Ukraine situation was 32 per cent funded, with \$224 million received out of the \$690.3 million required for the year.

### Impact of funding cuts



In Ukraine, UNHCR reached around **400,000** fewer people in 2025 compared with 2024. In the Republic of Moldova, financial aid was sharply reduced, dropping from **17,000** people to **9,000**, forcing many to adopt negative coping strategies. Across Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, office and community centre closures led to reduced protection, legal aid, support for survivors of violence against women and girls, financial aid, and livelihoods supports.

## Emergency Response Mechanism

To enhance UNHCR's capacity to respond rapidly to escalating crises, UNHCR established the Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM), a dedicated, life-saving financing instrument designed to enable immediate, flexible and effective responses for people forced to flee.

The ERM facilitates the activation of contributions within 72 hours of an emergency declaration, ensuring that critical preparedness measures and life-saving assistance reach displaced communities without delay.

By supporting the ERM, public and private donors play a direct role in sustaining UNHCR's rapid response capacity. The mechanism is underpinned by clear activation criteria, robust governance and a repayment feature that replenishes resources as additional funding becomes available, ensuring both speed and accountability.

UNHCR aims to mobilize \$150 million in 2026, including multi-year commitments to maintain readiness for future emergencies. Complementing flexible funding, the ERM will ensure that when crises strike, UNHCR can deliver protection and relief swiftly, effectively and at scale. [Read more here.](#)



UNHCR staff register Congolese refugees arriving in Rugombo, Burundi to help them access essential services after fleeing violence in the DRC. © UNHCR/Charity Nzomo

## Donor acknowledgement

UNHCR extends its sincere appreciation to its donors whose generous contributions enabled life-saving responses across the emergencies highlighted in this report.

Flexible and unearmarked funding is crucial in allowing UNHCR to respond rapidly and at scale during emergencies, prioritize needs in real time and adjust operations as situations evolve. These contributions ultimately ensure that protection and assistance reaches those most in need, when and where it matters most.

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Cover picture: Rahmatullah, 32, from Kunar province, lost his mother and son in the 31 August earthquake. With two other sons injured and livestock buried, his family urgently needs shelter, food and basic supplies to survive. © UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production



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