

# Indonesia

February 2021

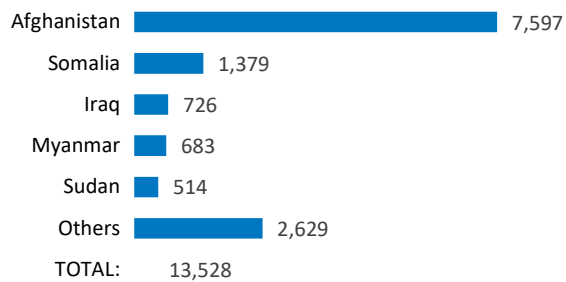
**13,528 persons** registered with UNHCR including - **73% adult** and **27% children**. Of the total number of adult, 28% are women and 72% are men.

The number of **Rohingya refugees** in **Lhokseumawe, Aceh** declined to 103 people at the end of reporting period from nearly 400 at the beginning of their arrival in June and September.

Of the **3,665 children** registered with UNHCR, **75 children are unaccompanied** by a parent or other adult relative and **39 children are separated** from their parents.

**1,123 vulnerable refugees** received the monthly subsistence allowance. While an additional 14 refugees received **COVID-19 relief assistance** in February.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

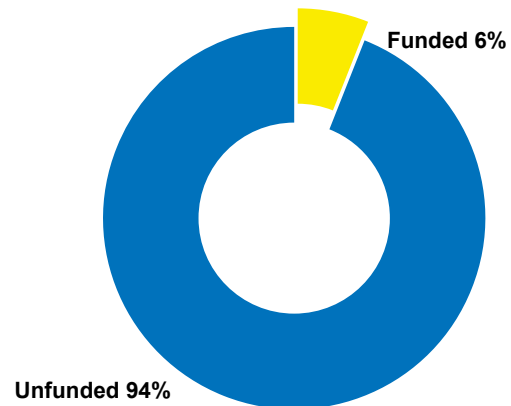


\* source: UNHCR proGres February 2021

## 2021 FUNDING

**USD 14.8M**

requested for UNHCR's response in Indonesia



## UNHCR PRESENCE

### Staff:

- 26 National Staff
- 8 International Staff
- 34 Affiliated Work Force

### Offices:

- 1 Main office [Jakarta]
- 5 Out-posted locations [Aceh, Medan, Pekanbaru, Tanjung Pinang, Makassar]



## Working with Partners

- UNHCR works closely with counterparts of the Republic of Indonesia to provide protection and support, and to identify solutions for persons under UNHCR's mandate, particularly the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs and its department for Refugees and People Smuggling; the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, including the Directorate-General of Immigration; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Social Affairs; the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Manpower.
- UNHCR engages with international and national NGOs as well as civil society partners, UN agencies, and UNHCR-funded partners – Church World Service (CWS), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), as well as other operational partners assisting refugees, including Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), the Indonesian Red Cross, Dompot Dhuafa, Human Initiative and the National Human Rights Commission, to assist the Government to ensure that refugees and stateless persons are protected and provided assistance. UNHCR works very closely under partnership agreement with its partner CWS to provide lifesaving medical assistance to the refugees and to address the special needs of the unaccompanied and other children at risk. Meanwhile distribution of monthly cash allowance to the most vulnerable refugees, education assistance, SGBV prevention and response, among others, are handled by UNHCR's other partner, CRS.

## Main Activities

### Protection

- While Indonesia is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, it has a long tradition of allowing access to and hosting refugees. Indonesia has enacted a comprehensive national refugee law, signed as a presidential regulation in December 2016, which provides access and temporary protection to refugees in the country until longer-term solutions can be found for them. Under the law, the Government has authorized UNHCR to help protect and find solutions for them.
- The 2016 refugee law includes provisions for the Government to rescue refugees on boats in distress near Indonesia and to help them disembark. These provisions were once again implemented on 25 June and 7 September, when nearly 400 Rohingya refugees were rescued in Lhoksemauwe, Aceh province. UNHCR worked together with the authorities, local Refugee Task Force, UN agencies, NGO partners and the local community to provide assistance to the group, which mainly consist of vulnerable women and children.
- Indonesia is not a party to the 1954 Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons and 1961 Convention on Reduction of Statelessness. In May 2020, based on a study by UNICEF conducted in 2019, it was reported that over 11 million children in Indonesia were without birth certificate. UNHCR works to advocate for access to universal birth registration for all children of marginalized groups, including refugee children. For the purpose the office has been working closely with Directorate General of Population and Civil Registry.
- Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical for UHCR Indonesia to receive sustained funding to be able to deliver protection and complementary solutions to the persons of concerns as the pandemic posed further challenges to the already limited resettlement opportunity.

### Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- Refugees do not have the right to work in Indonesia. Recognizing that direct assistance is not sustainable, UNHCR continues to advocate for refugees to be given access to livelihood opportunities and works with partners to create community-empowerment

and self-reliance programs that benefit Indonesians and refugees. The programs include vocational trainings and entrepreneurship schemes that promote economic development in Indonesian host communities. In December 2019, at the Global Refugee Forum organised by UNHCR in Geneva the Indonesian Government Delegation pledged support to refugee productivity empowerment activity as part of Indonesia's effort to address the global refugee crisis.

- Refugee women and men leaders representing various nationalities participate in activities implemented by UNHCR and partners, such as assisting vulnerable refugees in accessing services, disseminating information among the refugee community, managing community learning centres, providing skills training and education for children and adolescents, as well as providing interpretation and translation services. In 2020, UNHCR organised Virtual Town Hall meetings with Refugee Representatives (RRs) and wider refugee communities in Jakarta and other cities where refugees reside. The office plans to continue the initiative this year regularly.
- 1,123 vulnerable refugees (from 418 cases) continued to receive monthly subsistence allowance in February 2021. While additional 14 individuals who had not collected from the fifth month COVID-19 allowance, received the assistance in February 2021 making the total of those received COVID-19 allowance to 5,856. The distribution is made through Post Offices in areas where refugees living independently, including in out-post locations. Previously, from June – December 2020, as many as 5,823 refugees living independently [3,653 male and 2,170 female] had received the first to fifth batch of Covid-19 allowance.

### Education

- Indonesia is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and provides refugee children access to national schools through the Ministry of Education Circular Letter No. 75253/A.A4/HK/2019 issued on 10 July 2019. UNHCR encourages refugee children to enrol into the national school system, particularly at the primary school level. To prepare refugee children for enrolment in national schools, UNHCR is working with partners in Jakarta and the Greater area as well as out-posted locations to teach refugee children Bahasa Indonesia, as well as basic math and literacy, and local customs and culture.
- With our partners, UNHCR works for all refugee children to have access to national schools and as of end of February 2021, some 731 refugee children are enrolled in accredited national schools. Some 1,900 school aged children are not yet attending formal schools, but among them some 500 are receiving education through refugee learning centres organised by UNHCR, IOM or centres led by the refugee communities. UNHCR is conducting verification exercise and will obtain a more accurate number on the enrolment number. Challenges to increase refugee children's enrolment rates include limited knowledge of Bahasa Indonesia, inadequate sources of funding, and reports of limited places in public schools where refugees reside.
- Other educational opportunities include enrolment in online, accredited university courses. UNHCR encourages refugees to complete accredited courses through Coursera for Refugees, a free online learning platform, in addition to non-formal educational, vocational and recreational activities made available for children and youth in children's homes. In Jakarta and the greater area, as well as in the other out-posted locations, refugee communities have several community-based learning centers for refugee children. Through these centres, UNHCR continue to encourage refugee parents to prepare their children with the necessary skills until they are ready to enrol in national schools. As of end of February, 3,836 refugees are enrolled in online university courses and in community – based learning programs.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, refugee children who previously attended public schools continue their studies with arrangements made by their respective school. Working with partners, online distant-learning are made available for refugee children at UNHCR learning centres and some community-based learning centres. Some of the challenges faced by refugee students include the limited ownership of device and internet data that are required for online distant-learning. Language barrier also adds limitation to access the distant learning program provided by the government via television.

## Health

- Refugees have access to primary medical care through public health facilities, as well as community maternity and childcare, which provides immunizations. UNHCR works with partners to provide information on public health services and to raise health-prevention awareness and in covering life threatening/saving medical situation which is very expensive. UNHCR is grateful to Indonesia's Ministry of Health for issuing the 10 June 2020 Circular Note that ensures access to COVID-19-related services to registered refugees. Meanwhile, UNHCR continues to advocate for refugees to be included in the upcoming rollout of the vaccine against Covid19.
- During the course of 2020, UNHCR also provided various PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for Indonesian medical professionals who work at hospitals and PUSKESMAS (subdistrict medical centre) consisting of 30,000 surgical masks, 16,300 N95 masks and 5,280 bottles of 500 ml hand sanitizers.

## Durable Solutions

- While the opportunities provided by countries offering resettlement out of Indonesia are reducing, the most vulnerable refugees are identified for submission for the limited number of resettlement places available. In 2019, 663 refugees departed for resettlement to Australia, Canada, and the United States. This represents 4.8 percent of the total refugee population in the country. Meanwhile in 2020, as of the end of December, only 403 refugees have departed to third countries for resettlement. The outlook for resettlement places is a continued decrease, and it can therefore not be considered the only viable durable solution for the refugees in Indonesia. Unfortunately, refugees wait for resettlement although only a small number will be able to benefit for resettlement. For the first two months in 2021, only as many as 22 refugees departed to resettlement countries. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to find other solutions than resettlement and to consider Indonesia as a country of de facto longer term stay for refugees.
- UNHCR facilitates voluntary repatriation for refugees who request return, with arrangements made in close cooperation with IOM through its assisted voluntary return program. In 2019, only 1.8% of the total persons of concern (252 people) have returned voluntarily to their countries of origin. Meanwhile as of end of December 2020, 139 refugees have opted for voluntary repatriation (1% of the total persons of concern). While so far in 2021, the number of refugees repatriated voluntarily is 16 individuals.
- UNHCR provides information and guidance to refugees who may have family members abroad and would like to pursue private sponsorship options. In 2019, 57 people (0.4% of total persons of concern) departed abroad on private sponsorships, while as of December 2020, the number recorded by UNHCR is 27 people (0.2% of total persons of concern).

## External/ Donor Relations

**UNHCR is grateful for the support of the following donors for their funding either directly to the operation or via softly earmarked or unearmarked funds:** Australia | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Ireland | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Private Donors | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America

**In addition, UNHCR thanks the following organizations, private sector partners and other UN Agencies for their support and donation in recent years:** Bank Mayapada | Bina Nusantara School | Dato' Tahir | Global Jaya School | Indonesia for Refugees | Metro TV | PT. Eagle Indopharma | PT. Tan Kiang | SPH Lippo Cikarang School | SCTV | Tahir Foundation | Tunas Muda School | Unilever (UK) | Uniqlo | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS | Wanda House of Jewels | IOM | UNICEF | ILO | UNFPA | UNAIDS

**CONTACTS**

**Mitra Suryono**, Associate External Relations/ Public Information Officer  
[suryono@unhcr.org](mailto:suryono@unhcr.org).

**LINKS**

[www.unhcr.org/id](http://www.unhcr.org/id)

Facebook: UNHCR Indonesia

Twitter: UNHCRIndo

Instagram: unhcrindonesia