East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region

January - March 2022

KEY FIGURES (AS OF 31 MARCH 2022)

4.97M Refugees and Asylum-seekers
12.64M Internally Displaced Persons
65,766 Refugee Returnees in 2022

REFUGEES & ASYLUM SEEKERS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Countries</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Sudan</td>
<td>2.29 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.R. Congo</td>
<td>771K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>595K</td>
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<td>Sudan</td>
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<td>Burundi</td>
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<td>Ethiopia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>29K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>163K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The figures here refer to refugees and asylum-seekers hosted within the EHAGL region. They very slightly from the situation figures provided above, as the situation figures also include those hosted in non-NGLS, neighboring countries (e.g., DRC, Chad).

FUNDING UPDATE (AS OF MARCH 2022)

USD 1.9 Billion

2022 financial requirements for the EHAGL region

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OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (EHAGL) region is host to some 4.97 million refugees and asylum-seekers, as at the end of March 2022. The majority are from South Sudan (2.28 million), the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, with significant numbers from Burundi, Sudan, and Eritrea. The region hosts 67 per cent of the refugees on the African continent and 20 per cent of the global refugee population. The region also has 12.37 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) mostly in Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Burundi, displaced due to both conflict and natural disasters. Some 65,766 refugees have returned to their countries of origin so far in 2022.

Communities across the Horn of Africa region are experiencing one of the worst drought situations in decades, following three failed rainy seasons, affecting especially Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The Federal Government of Somalia in November 2021 declared the drought a national emergency. By the end of the first quarter of 2022, the drought situation had rapidly deteriorated, raising the risk of famine in pockets across the Horn of Africa, especially Somalia, and causing large scale internal displacements and some cross-border movements. Projections suggest that up to 1.4 million people could be internally displaced in Somalia within the next 6 months. Soaring food prices are also causing a serious food security crisis resulting in high malnutrition rates.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

SITUATIONAL UPDATES

BURUNDI SITUATION: By the end of March 2022, countries in the Great Lakes Region were host to 261,595 Burundian refugees. The country has experienced relative political stability since the political transition in May 2020 and the overall political, working environment and security situation have improved.

The voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees continued, with a total of 4,970 Burundian refugees returning home from January to 31 March 2022, mainly from Tanzania (909), Uganda (2,057), Rwanda (1,491) and the DRC (513). Since 2017 UNHCR and partners have facilitated the voluntary repatriation of over 185,000 Burundian refugees.

In 2021, UNHCR decided to streamline the number of RRRPs in Africa and globally and with the decreasing number of Burundian refugees in the region, the Burundi RRRP was marked for phasing out at the end of 2021. With the ongoing streamlining, UNHCR will maintain distinct situational budgets and RRRPs for emergency situations for only a few years before mainstreaming them into the country programs. The Burundi situation therefore does not have an RRRP in 2022. However, the Burundi Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan (JRRRP), co-led with UNDP, remains in place.
SOUTH SUDAN SITUATION: The South Sudanese refugee population, the largest in the region, remain extremely vulnerable. Over 2.3 million in camps, settlements, and urban areas are living in precarious conditions, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the looming food insecurity situation. UNHCR and governments in the region have registered a total of 14,173 refugee new arrivals and 59,501 South Sudanese spontaneous returns between 1 January and 31 March 2022. After nearly a decade of conflict and despite efforts toward implementing the peace agreement, South Sudan continues to grapple with sporadic violence, chronic food insecurity and the devastating impact of major flooding.

On 18 March 2022, UNHCR together with 102 humanitarian and development partners launched the 2022 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) for the South Sudan situation. The RRRP is appealing for US$1.2 billion to deliver much-needed humanitarian assistance and protection to 2.3 million South Sudanese refugees and local communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda.

The virtual launch for the RRRP organized by the UNHCR Regional Bureau for the East, Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes region featured an opening statement by UNHCR’s Regional Director, and a panel of speakers, including a young South Sudanese refugee woman living in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya; the Ag. Commissioner for Refugees of the Office of the Prime Minister of the Government of Uganda; the Director of Alight in Sudan; and OCHA Deputy Head of Office in South Sudan. The South Sudan refugee crisis remains the largest on the African continent and has been chronically underfunded with only 21 per cent funds received in 2021.

The 2022 South Sudan RRRP includes 108 partners and UN Agencies and will aim to comprehensively address the protection needs of South Sudanese refugees particularly children, women, and youth. Biometric registration, documentation, and data management – in collaboration with host governments to support implementation of durable solutions strategies – will continue. Exploring and pursuing innovative approaches to refugee protection and self-reliance based on participatory assessments with all stakeholders will be critical. This includes systematically expanding cash assistance and other initiatives aimed at alleviating the dependency of refugees on aid.

SOMALIA SITUATION: More than 664,030 Somali refugees continue to reside in Ethiopia, Kenya, Yemen and elsewhere in the region with 2.97 million persons internally displaced (IDPs). At the end of March 2022, there were 32,079 refugees and asylum-seekers registered in Somalia, mainly from Ethiopia (17,065 asylum-seekers and 4,666 refugees) and Yemen (8,903 refugees and asylum-seekers). Another 1,445 persons of concerns are from Syria (1,163), Tanzania (139) and other countries (143). A total of 92,663 persons have been assisted by UNHCR to return from Kenya, Yemen, and other countries between 2014 - 2022. In March, 84,000 new internal displacements were recorded by the UNHCR-led Protection and Returns Monitoring Network (PRMNN). Drivers include drought related (74,000), conflict and insecurity (7,000) and others (3,000).

The operational context in Somalia remained complex, characterized by a risk of famine, insecurity, and political tensions due to the ongoing elections, with the House of People elections being rescheduled. High political tensions further affected the security situation and the worsening drought conditions continued to displace civilians, presenting a risk of famine by the end of March.

NORTHERN ETHIOPIA SITUATION: The ongoing conflict in Northern Ethiopia, sixteen months later, continues to have severe humanitarian impact on civilians, including refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs), amid widespread reports of gender-based violence, human rights abuses, loss of shelter and access to basic services, and critical levels of food insecurity. More than 2 million Ethiopians have been displaced within the country, and some 60,000 across the border into Sudan. Several camps and settlements hosting Eritrean refugees have been attacked or destroyed, further displacing tens of thousands of refugees within Ethiopia. UNHCR and partners continued to face significant challenges in implementing planned activities, severely impacting their ability to work and deliver assistance. The continued volatile security situation, lack of unhindered access, scarcity of cash and fuel, has curtailed service delivery.

On 24 March, the Ethiopian government announced an indefinite humanitarian truce to ensure free flow of emergency humanitarian aid to all in need of assistance in northern Ethiopia. The government called on the donor community to redouble their contributions
to alleviate the situation and reiterated its commitment to work in collaboration with relevant organizations to expedite the provision of humanitarian assistance to those in need. In addition to enabling the delivery of aid, the government expressed its hope that this truce would pave way for the resolution of the conflict in northern Ethiopia. In response, the TPLF indicated that, “if the right circumstances arise for people to receive the level of humanitarian assistance commensurate with needs on the ground, and within a reasonable timeframe, the Government of Tigray is committed to implementing a cessation of hostilities effective immediately.” In addition, TPLF stated that it would do everything it can to make sure that this cessation of hostilities is a success.

On 4 March, UNHCR launched an Ethiopia Regional Appeal seeking US$ 205 million to assist 1.3 million IDPs and 158,000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, as well as an anticipated 110,000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan. Some US$16 million was also included for preparedness activities in Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan. A briefing note was issued and an appeal video also shared on social media. The appeal was previewed for regional donors in a donor briefing ahead of its publication; a briefing at Geneva level for key donors has also been planned.

On 18 January, heavy fighting broke out in Tongo, Benishangul Gumuz Region (BSGR). Tongo refugee camp, which hosts some 12,000 refugees, was caught up in the crossfire and subsequently looted and burned and all humanitarian staff evacuated from the area. On 4 February, UNHCR released a media briefing note outlining coordinated efforts with the Ethiopian Government’s Refugee Returnees Service (RRS) and partners to provide the most urgent assistance to displaced refugees, including hot meals, clean water, and medical care. Benishangul Gumuz regional authorities also demonstrated solidarity with refugees and identified a new temporary site with capacity to accommodate 20,000 people.

On 21 January, UNHCR released a media briefing note expressing deep concerns at the deteriorating conditions faced by Eritrean refugees in the two remaining camps in the Tigray region, including the lack of food, water, and medicine. After three weeks with no access due to the security situation, UNHCR staff managed to reach Mai Aini and Adi Harush refugee camps on 17 January for the first time since the air strikes earlier in the month in and near the camps. On 24 February, a convoy of 15 WFP trucks carrying 290 MT of food departed Mekelle to Mai Aini and Adi Harush refugee camps and UNHCR and WFP managed to successfully conduct a general food distribution in the two camps for 22,533 Eritrean refugees. This was the first distribution of food in the camps since a one-month ration was provided in December 2021.

On 28 January, WFP issued a press release on food insecurity levels in Tigray, indicating that 4.6 million people, or 83 per cent of the region’s population, are estimated to be food insecure. (The data excludes western Tigray.) The assessment, carried out in November 2021, also indicated that 2 million of these are severely food insecure, equivalent to Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) 4 & 5 levels. WFP said that “families are exhausting all means to feed themselves, with three quarters of the population using extreme coping strategies to survive.” Levels of food insecurity are most worrying in North-Western, Eastern, and Central zones of Tigray, where families are suffering from severe to very severe levels of hunger. The full report can be found here.

As of 31 March, the number of registered Eritrean refugees in Alemwach settlement in North Gondar stood at 3,700 individuals. The Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) has been transporting refugees to the settlement from three different locations along the Tigray- Amhara border area, all located approximately 100 km from Alemwach. UNHCR and partners are facilitating provision of assistance for the new arrivals.

In Sudan, the UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for East Africa together with UNHCR’s Director of the Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes Region visited Um Rakuba and Tunaydbah refugee camps and Gallabat border crossing point as part of a three-day visit from 28 – 30 March to Eastern Sudan. Refugees described to them the challenging circumstances of their flight, while young refugees highlighted the need to access higher education and livelihood. The delegation met with Sudanese and Ethiopian border authorities at Gallabat and discussed the reception of new arrivals and protection issues at the border area.

As part of ongoing preparations for the upcoming rainy season (May – October), 3,930 tents will be prepositioned in Um Rakuba, Tunaydbah and Babikri, in addition to emergency shelter kits consisting of wooden poles, plastic sheets, bamboos, grass mats and locally produced ropes. 11,000 pre-disaster kits containing sandbags, binding wires and various tools have also been ordered to be pre-positioned and distributed to refugee households in the three locations. In addition, to better ensure access throughout the rainy season, UNHCR and WFP will rehabilitate roads and drainages that will benefit both the refugees and the host community.

COUNTRY UPDATES

ETHIOPIA: On 23 March, the German Embassy in Addis Ababa in cooperation with UNHCR and the Association of Ethipians Educated in Germany (AEEG) organized a high-level event to mark the 30th anniversary of Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) worldwide, as well as 20 years of programme implementation in Ethiopia. Students of the DAFI Alumni, Ethiopian Government representatives, partners and donors gathered to exchange knowledge and experiences from the participation
in DAFI programme. Over the last 20 years, more than 2,000 refugees in Ethiopia have benefitted from the DAFI scholarships, including 1,000 graduates.

On 28 – 30 March, UNHCR participated in the 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Education of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) in Addis Ababa, under the motto “Accelerating Access to Inclusive and Quality Education for Refugees, Returnees, IDPs and Host Communities: Shared Responsibilities for Better Results Amidst the COVID-19 Crises”. As a core member of the IGAD Djibouti Declaration process, UNHCR has a leading role in advocating for the inclusion of refugees into the national education systems.

**KENYA:** As of 31 March 2022, Kenya was host to 547,884 registered refugees and asylum-seekers (234,007 in Dadaab; 227,986 in Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Settlement; and 85,891 in urban areas). Of these, 84% live in camps, while 16% are living in urban areas. Most refugees and asylum-seekers are from Somalia and South Sudan, with smaller populations from DR Congo, Ethiopia, Burundi, Sudan, Uganda, Eritrea, and Rwanda.

UNHCR continues to co-chair a committee together with the Department of Refugee Services (formerly the Refugee Affairs Secretariat) to support the development of updated Refugee Regulations for the operationalisation of the Refugees Act, 2021. The Act was passed in November 2021 and officially came into effect in February 2022. UNHCR Kenya has shared an overview of the key provisions of the Act with key donors and partners across the region.

In January 2022, the first group of over 12,000 Garissa residents who had initially been registered as refugees in Dadaab were issued with Kenyan identity cards and deregistered as refugees. The government of Kenya launched the delisting and vetting of refugees in December 2019. While there have been some delays in implementation, the delisting process entails a thorough vetting process of the individuals and is ongoing.

Under the PROSPECTS partnership, UNHCR and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) signed a data-sharing agreement to build the resilience of refugee and host communities. The Partnership to Improve Prospects for Forcibly Displaced Persons and Host Communities (PROSPECTS) in Kenya aims to enhance the enabling environment for socio-economic inclusion of forcibly displaced persons and host communities, enhance access to education, training and protection for host and displaced persons, and strengthen the resilience of host communities through inclusive socio-economic development.

**RWANDA:** Rwanda hosted a total of 127,012 refugees and asylum-seekers at the end of March 2022. The population of concern includes mainly persons from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (60.7%) and Burundi (38.9%). A total of 981 individuals were voluntarily repatriated to Burundi in the first quarter of the year, including 69 refugees repatriated from Rwanda and 912 Burundian refugees repatriated from Uganda via Rwanda.

**SUDAN:** By the end of March 2022, Sudan hosted more than 1.1 million refugees, majority from South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and other countries. In Sudan, most refugees live in out-of-camp settlements, within host communities and in urban areas (61%), while others (39%) live in 26 camps. UNHCR and partners continue to assist about 51,000 Ethiopian refugees in East Sudan and 9,200 Ethiopian asylum-seekers in Blue Nile State. The country also has more than 3 million internally displaced Persons (IDPs), in its Darfur region, which has suffered volatile insecurity for almost two decades.

In February 2022, UNHCR and 40 international and national partners, launched the 2022 inter-agency funding appeal to assist nearly one million refugees in the country. The inter-agency Country Refugee Response Plan (CRRP) is seeking for US $517 million to help meet basic needs, bolster self-reliance, and realise the rights of 925,000 refugees living in Sudan. Of the total number of refugees targeted by the plan, some 123,000 are from Ethiopia: including 59,000 who fled to Sudan due to the ongoing conflict in northern Ethiopia, 13,000 who were already in the country, and anticipating a possible increase of up to 52,000 additional Ethiopian refugees in 2022. Building on the nexus framework, the 2022 CRRP also looks at the essential linkages between humanitarian and development actors to work towards durable solutions.

**SOUTH SUDAN:** South Sudan has been experiencing the worst flooding in decades since October 2021. On 29 March, UNHCR’s Special Advisor on Climate Action issued a press briefing warning that the prolonged flooding and displacement in South Sudan is expected to worsen when the wet season begins in May, hence urgent action is needed to protect already vulnerable populations from its worst impacts. Thirty-three (33) out of 79 counties have been badly affected by the floods, which have not subsided since the last wet season. The impacts are especially harsh in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states, where thousands of people have been displaced, while others are marooned in dike-ringed compounds, holding back flood waters with mud, sticks and plastic sheeting. According to the UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), more than 835,000 people have been impacted by the flooding in South Sudan. UNHCR provided plastic sheets, hoes, spades, and sandbags to help strengthen flood defences, and is supporting families displaced to Malakal and other towns. Humanitarian access is limited with roads flooded or washed away and airfields under water.
The approaching wet season threatens to swamp extremely remote communities where residents are already surrounded by floodwater. Despite multiple challenges, residents have been extremely generous to those displaced by hazardous weather events, often sharing the meagre resources. However, they need sustained support to avert devastating consequences.

**TANZANIA:** Currently, the country hosts 248,492 refugees and asylum-seekers as of 31 March, mainly from Burundi and the DR Congo. In Tanzania, 84% of the refugees currently live in camps located in the country’s North-western region of Kigoma.

Between 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} March 2022, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and UNHCR, convened a High-Level Protection Dialogue in Dar es Salaam to discuss refugee protection and solutions, support to host communities and to strengthen their partnership. Acknowledging Tanzania’s long-standing commitment to hosting refugees and in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), the Dialogue agreed on further efforts to improve access to the territory and international protection, enhance asylum adjudication systems and structures, reinvigorate the voluntary repatriation programme to Burundi and bolster livelihood opportunities for refugees.

“For decades, Tanzania has generously opened its doors and become a safe haven for thousands of people who were forced to flee due to conflict. This Dialogue was an excellent opportunity for the Tanzanian government and UNHCR to recognize the many achievements so far and agree on ways to improve refugees’ living conditions, continue to search for long lasting solutions as well as increase support to the communities that are hosting them.” said Gillian Triggs, UNHCR’s Assistant High Commissioner for Protection who also attended the High Level Protection Dialogue together with the Assistant High Commissioner for Operations and the Regional Director for the East, Horn and Great Lakes region.

A set of key recommendations were jointly adopted by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and UNHCR at the conclusion of the Dialogue and a Plan of Action to implement the recommendations is underway.
UGANDA: By end of March 2022, the refugee and asylum-seeker population in Uganda stood at 1,582,076 individuals marking a decrease of 13,329 individuals (0.8%) from the population in February 2022. The population decrease is linked to the inactivation of registered refugees who did not show up for the verification exercise in Nakivale and Rwamwanja refugee settlements. Of the total registered population, 1,537,546 (97%) are Refugees and 44,530 (3%) are Asylum-Seekers with 93% residing in the settlements. Majority of the refugees are from South Sudan (61%), DR Congo (29%), Somalia (3%) and Burundi (3%).

Uganda has received over 35,000 new arrivals fleeing war and persecution in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since January 2022. The conflict in the North Kivu and Ituri provinces of DRC intensified in late March 2022, triggering displacement of refugees into Uganda. New arrivals have been received through three main entry points of Bunagana in Kisoro District, Busunga in Bundibugyo District and Mponwe in Kasese District.

In a statement issued by UNHCR, the Government of Uganda and humanitarian partners assisted some 10,000 refugees in southwest Kisoro district. As people arrived in Uganda on 28 and 29 March, artillery fire and gunshots could be heard from across the border, indicating that clashes were ongoing. Six people arrived with gunshot wounds and were taken for treatment.

UNHCR and Uganda’s Office of the Prime Minister – which manages several transit centres for asylum seekers along the Congolese border – are responding to the emergency in coordination with district and local authorities and partners. UNHCR has been relocating asylum-seekers to the nearby Nyakabande transit centre. Additional financial support is urgently needed to respond to the urgent and immediate basic needs of the new arrivals, provide health, water and sanitation among other urgent needs and prepare land to settle them.
KEY REGIONAL UPDATES

Drought Response Update: In an update issued by UNHCR Somalia, the UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN) recorded 500,000 people internally displaced because of drought in the first three months of 2022, in addition to the 874,000 people already reported as displaced in Somalia in 2021, among which 245,000 were primarily associated with drought (PRMN data-March). Alarming projections suggest that up to 1.4 million people could be displaced within the next 6 months.

In a statement issued by UNHCR, assistance is being scaled up to thousands of people displaced by severe drought in Somalia following three consecutive failed rainy seasons that have decimated crops and livestock. People’s coping mechanisms have been eroded, forcing thousands to flee their homes in search of humanitarian assistance including food, shelter, and safe drinking water. In the first week of March alone, more than 17,000 people in the country’s southern Bay region were internally displaced by the drought, joining tens of thousands of people similarly displaced across the country between January and February this year. The majority are reported to be children, older people, and pregnant and lactating mothers.

In Somalia, UNHCR is working closely with humanitarian partners to deliver much-needed assistance. To date, some 95,000 (16,000 families) Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host community members have benefitted from core relief items (CRIs) comprised of household items, either in cash or in kind. Likewise, more than 12,500 vulnerable IDPs have received in-kind or monetized emergency shelter support. Additionally, UNHCR has also distributed multipurpose cash to more than 16,000 at risk IDPs and host community members, allowing drought affected families to prioritize and address their needs with dignity.

UNHCR through its leadership in the Protection, Shelter and CCCM (co-leadership) Clusters, is coordinating drought response activities in the respective three sectors. For example, advocating for the Centrality of Protection in the overall humanitarian response, the Protection Cluster has finalized the Drought Response Protection Mainstreaming Guidance Note for cluster members. The Shelter Cluster has developed a new drought response analytical dashboard to help partners identify gaps and target areas inhabited by newly displaced persons.

UNHCR and partners are also monitoring cross border movements related to the drought. More than 11,000 new drought-affected refugee arrivals from Somalia were registered in Ethiopia in the first three months of the year (some having arrived towards the end of 2021). UNHCR is intensifying its planning and response to the anticipated increase in drought-impacted displaced communities – both refugees and IDPs – including distribution of CRIs, emergency shelter materials, and selected WASH materials; targeted cash-based interventions; ensuring the treatment of severely malnourished children; strengthening protection monitoring and providing emergency education and child protection support.

In Kenya, in addition to UNHCR’s ongoing support to refugees and host communities within its regular country program, including WASH and other support to drought-affected host communities, UN agencies that received The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for the drought response have agreed to include refugees in their response, including for food security (led by WFP), emergency livelihoods (FAO), nutrition (UNICEF and WFP), GBV (UNFPA), and child protection (UNICEF).

COVID-19 Update: The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect the health and wellbeing of Persons of Concern (POC) and host communities in the region. By the end of the first quarter, there were 12,096 confirmed COVID-19 cases among Persons of Concern (POCs) in the 11 countries in the EHAGL region, with Uganda recording the highest percentage of reported cases in the region at 49% of cases among POCs, followed by Rwanda at 16%, South Sudan at 13%, and Kenya 10%. Since the roll-out of the vaccination process, a total of 476,417 vaccine doses have been administered to refugees in the region, with 420,834 of the vaccinated POCs receiving at least one dose and 279,629 being fully vaccinated.
Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region, as well as to those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

Total contributions to the region, inclusive of COVID-19 contributions amount to USD 176 million as of 29 March 2022.
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