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Annual Report 2023

Humanitarian Response Roster

DRC Standby Roster



The Humanitarian Response Roster DRC Standby Roster

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Danish Refugee Council is an international humanitarian displacement organization, supporting refugees and internally displaced persons in 40 countries through provision of protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance.

The Humanitarian Response Roster is a part of the DRC Standby Roster and is an instrument to support UN agencies with specialized professionals to fill short-term staffing gaps and thereby improve the emergency response to humanitarian displacement crises that enables faster and more effective support to people in need.





Humanitarian Response Roster: The Year in Review

In 2023 the DRC Humanitarian Response Roster (HRR) deployed a wide range of experts to our eight UN partners. In general, the deployments were supporting both onset emergencies and protracted crises; however, during the year a particular focus was made on the Sudan crisis, Türkiye/Syria Earthquake, and the Palestine crisis. The drought in East Africa also resulted in several deployments, with Somalia receiving the most experts in 2023. In total, the HRR deployed experts to 36 countries.

Over the year, the Humanitarian Response Roster deployed 78 skilled experts worldwide. The main technical profiles deployed were within Information Management, Cluster Coordination, Humanitarian Affairs Officers, Emergency Management, GBV, and Logistics. Information Management experts were requested by many UN operations and have been for several years. The high number of deployments for central coordination roles (cluster and humanitarian affairs) is a result of the DRC HRR's focus on this important work in the field. Lastly, as WFP funded several deployments in 2023, the number of logistic experts deployed during the year is therefore proportionally high.

In 2023, the DRC HRR had a special focus on deploying several younger experts with less international experience. The reason for this focus was that the HRR aims to take an active part in building the capacity of humanitarian experts who will continue the work in this sector in the years ahead.

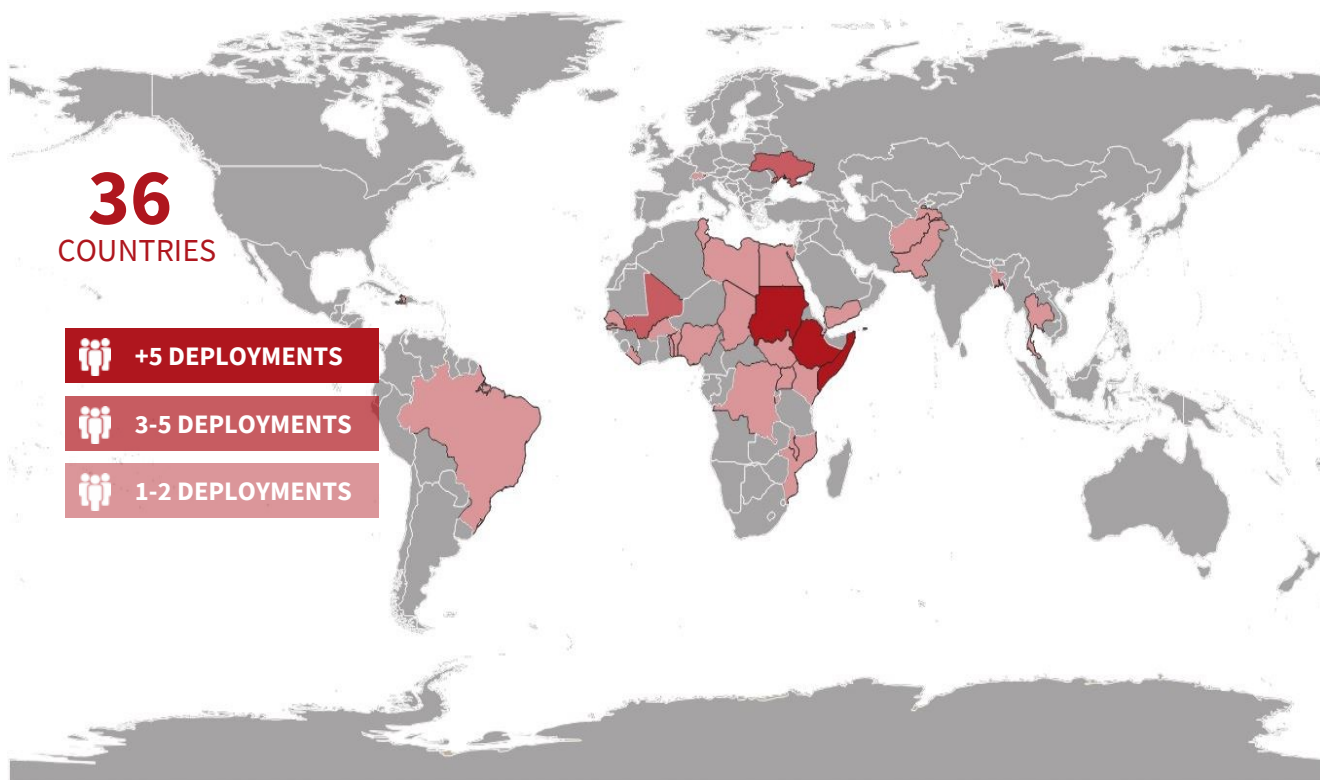
The HRR welcomed several new experts in 2023 including Environment/Energy/Climate Change advisors. The focus on this technical area will continue in the coming years as the needs for this expertise are increasing from the UN's side. Recruitment during the year also resulted in new roster experts within Protection, Shelter, and Cluster Coordination .

Three successful monitoring missions were carried out during 2023, to Bangladesh, Türkiye, and Ethiopia. The focus was on the employee's well-being and their integration into the operations, as well as assessing the need for future support. During these missions, the monitors met with our UN partners as well as our deployees deployed to these duty stations. The HRR also attended the Standby Partnership Network Annual Consultations in Geneva and co-hosted the Mid-Annual Consultations in Copenhagen. These monitoring missions and meetings are a crucial tool for us to maintain the strong relationship with our UN partners, and to consciously develop and improve our Roster.



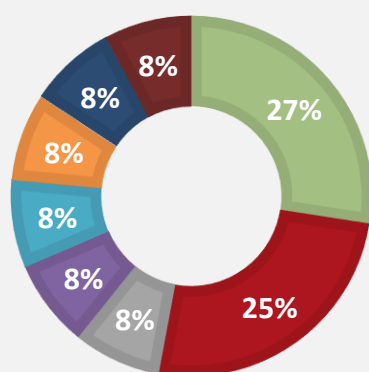
Deployments in 2023

BY COUNTRY



TOP 8 PROFILES

- Logistics
- Information Management
- Humanitarian Affairs
- Cluster Coordination - Shelter
- Programme Management in Emergencies
- Cluster Coordination - CCCM
- GBV
- Cash & Voucher Expert

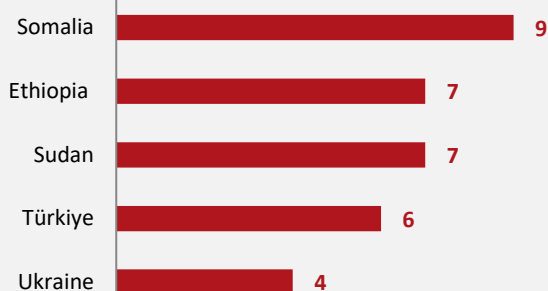


78 DEPLOYMENTS

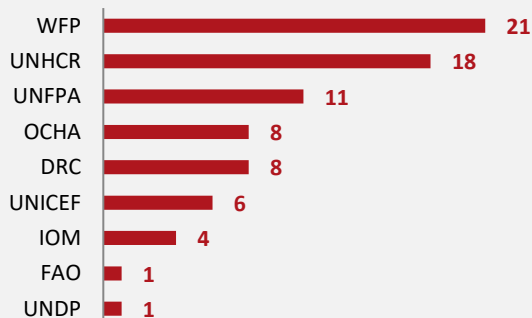


376 DEPLOYMENT MONTHS

TOP 5 COUNTRIES



AGENCY / TOTAL DEPLOYMENTS



47 different nationalities deployed, **58%** from the Global South.

Oldest deployee was **79** years old, while the youngest was **32** years old.

Fastest deployment - **14** days – from request received to deployee on the ground.



Stories from the Field

Sudan response – Giovanni Zanelli

Senior Field Officer to UNHCR in Abeche, Chad

How would you describe the situation in Abeche?

In the Eastern part of Chad, where I am based, we had 13 refugee camps hosting a total of 420,000 “old” refugees. Since the problem in Sudan started, people are arriving from Darfur basically every single day. In total, we had approximately 500,000 Sudanese refugees, and new refugees keep arriving every day. These new people are coming from Darfur, in large majority women and children. Only a few men. All of them in a very dire situation.

What are the conditions of the Sudanese refugees?

I have been in the humanitarian field for around 30 years, and only a few times I have seen people in a desperate situation like I saw in the informal settlement of Borota. First of all, they are mainly very young women, around 20 years old, with many children. They came with almost nothing, as they are poor already from Darfur and they have had to leave everything to different Sudanese militia in order to reach the Chadian border.

They arrive in villages where the host population can, in the best scenario, afford to help them only for the first few days. They don't have a roof, only the lucky ones can find some trees to settle under. They don't have food; they drink water which is not potable. They are vulnerable women who, for the most, were not treated well while trying to reach the border. We try to do our best, but despite our efforts, the response isn't as fast as it could be. We lack financial and human resources, and the logistics are a nightmare with bad roads and very difficult transport conditions. So, it often takes days, sometimes even weeks, to respond to new refugees needs. The government is committed and willing to help but does not have enough resources and mostly relies on the support of the international community.

What is your role in the response?

My official role was Roving Field Officer, but I switched to emergency mode. Therefore, I often go on mission to the Chadian/Sudanese border. I am roving in the different entry points where people arrive, trying to organize the response. The first time, in early April, around 10,000 people arrived in the same area within a few days, the second time was around 15,000, then it was 25,000...

What did you experience at the start of the Sudan crisis on 15th April? And when did you realize that this would cause a massive displacement into Chad?

There were signals before the problem in Khartoum started. The first waves of arrivals were related to conflicts between communities. When we spoke with some of the local authorities in the village of arrivals, they said “this is just the beginning”. And a few days later, the conflict in Khartoum started. Conflicts between communities in Darfur have been occurring for the past 20 years. I was in Chad in 2004 when the first Sudanese refugees arrived, and the first camps were opened. The problem was already there, and now it has exploded again. It is a very neglected crisis by the international community, and despite the efforts by UNHCR and the humanitarian community, donors are not seeing progress or durable solutions for the refugees. We don’t have enough resources, and the response is still underfunded.

What is the most interesting and the most challenging part of your work?

Even though I am used to these kinds of operations and situations, it is always satisfying when you can do something for people in vulnerable conditions. Of course, you have to be flexible and adapt yourself to different tasks, but, honestly, it is not a big challenge for me. I know this kind of business, I am willing to take my bag and move to another country with short notice, I am willing and used to changing my ToR. The most challenging part for me is that, at my age of almost 60 years old, sleeping under no roof or living in a place with no toilets is not as easy as it was for me 25 or 30 years ago.

How do you cope with the stress and the emotional impact of the situation you are dealing with?

At times, I am very tired. Especially when returning from field missions. But mostly because we work very long hours, under the sun and in very high temperatures. It is just physical fatigue. How do I cope with that? I don’t know exactly, but I do. Maybe thanks to dinners and laughs with colleagues at the guesthouse. And then of course we have R&R every two months, and even a short holiday in Italy is enough for me to recharge the batteries.



What do you foresee for the future situation in Chad and the needs in this area?

Unfortunately, I am not very positive. I hope it will not be like the situation in 2004, with people staying in Chad for ages. The worrying part is the fact that this is a forgotten and “chronic” crisis. I hope I will not come back in maybe 20 years and see that the refugees are still there. I was in Chad 20 years ago, and when I came back this year, I found the same camps with children of the refugees that I met 20 years ago and their parents still there. At least they are safe in Chad, but I don’t foresee good things happening for the Sudanese refugees in Chad during the coming years or maybe even decades. While the war in Ukraine ongoing, I am afraid there will not be more attention paid to African refugee crises, neither in general nor to the one in Chad.

Earthquake Response – Satish Pandey

Supply Chain Specialist to UNFPA in Damascus, Syria

In your typical workday, what are some of your key tasks and do you face any challenges in doing them?

In my typical workday, I work with the UNFPA Syria supply team, where I ensure that required supplies, such as sexual and reproductive health (SRH) supplies, medicines, and dignity kits are delivered to different field offices around Syria. Our daily work during this process is to coordinate with teams in programme and operations to ensure that those supplies are delivered smoothly.

What has been your biggest achievement in your deployment?

My biggest achievement in Syria has been to streamline the supply chain reporting system, which was lacking when I arrived here. In the first week of my deployment, the senior management told me that there is a gap in the supply chain reporting system to senior management and that I should support the country team to have a system in place which could address this gap. In consultation with the Head of Supply and the supply team, I coordinated the development of the supply report. The report has been put on a platform that is updated in real time, which has provided transparency in the system. So now, whenever the senior management want to know the overall supply status, they can just look at the report.

In February 2023, massive earthquakes hit Syria and Türkiye, leaving thousands of people dead, injured, and homeless.

How did you experience the consequences of the earthquake in your work?

The earthquake made an already difficult life even more challenging for the Syrian people, also for our staff members who lost their friends and relatives in this disaster. Syria was already a difficult context to work in, and the response after the earthquake only became more challenging, as staff members now needed to handle their personal situations and take care of family and friends in addition to their professional obligations.



Your work is focused on supply delivery. How would you describe the supply delivery situation in Syria?

In Syria, there are areas which are controlled by the Syrian government, and areas that are controlled by non-government actors. To send supplies to different parts of Syria, we need permission from the government for each shipment. The minimum time to get permissions is two weeks. Until we get these permissions, the supplies are kept in the warehouses while people are suffering.

Have you learned something new from this deployment that you will bring with you for future deployments?

Yes, this was my first deployment with UNFPA. When you are dealing with sexual and reproductive health (SRH) commodity specific supply chain, there are different quality assurance mechanisms and cold chain maintenance process for SRH supplies which I have learned to deal with here. When I go into new assignments, I will be able to use this learning from here. In addition, working under trade and payment restrictions, there are different rules when you want to import things, so that is something I have learned here which I will be able to use in future deployments.



Recruitment and Trainings

In 2023, we received **410** applications from technical experts who wanted to join the roster, **65** were shortlisted and completed the online technical test.

In the Humanitarian Response Roster, **36 new members** were welcomed in 2023, of which **53%** are females.

25 different nationalities were recruited, **60%** of the new members are from the Global South.

The new members were recruited within the **profiles**; Cluster Coordination, Protection, Environment & Climate Change, and Shelter.

In 2023, **two Induction Trainings** were conducted, with a total attendance of **33** Humanitarian Response Roster members. In addition, **3** members attended different UN trainings.



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