



# Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022

**For Prelims:** [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#), [World War II](#), [Internal displacement](#), [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), [Ukraine](#), [1951 Refugee Convention](#), [UN General Assembly](#)

**For Mains:** Drivers of Displacement Around the World, Solutions to Address Forced Displacement.

## Why in News?

The year 2022 witnessed a staggering surge in the number of people uprooted from their homes due to social and [climate crises](#), as highlighted in a report by the [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\)](#).

- With an increase of 21% compared to 2021, a total of 108.4 million individuals were forcibly displaced, including a significant number of children.

## What are the Major Highlights of the Report?

### ▪ About:

- According to UNHCR's statistics on forced displacement, the number of people who were forced to flee their homes due to **persecution, conflict, violence, [human rights violations](#) and events seriously disturbing public order reached a record 108.4 million by the end of 2022, and 30% of them were children.**
  - This represents an increase of **19 million people compared to the end of 2021.**
  - Of the global total of 108.4 million forcibly displaced people, **35.3 million were refugees**, people who crossed an international border to find safety.
    - **Forced displacement** can be **internal or external**, depending on whether the displaced people remain within their country of origin or cross an international border.

### ▪ Drivers of Displacement:

- The main driver of displacement in 2022 was the **full-scale war in [Ukraine](#), which erupted in February 2022** and created the fastest and one of the largest displacement crises **since [World War II](#).**
  - By the end of 2022, **a total of 11.6 million Ukrainians remained displaced, including 5.9 million within their country** and 5.7 million who fled to neighbouring countries and beyond.
- Other ongoing and new conflicts also contributed to forced displacement across the globe, such as in the **[Democratic Republic of the Congo \(DRC\)](#), [Ethiopia](#) and [Myanmar](#), where more than 1 million people were displaced within each country.**
  - The total number of people displaced across the world increased to 110 million by May 2023, **driven by the fresh [conflict in Sudan](#)**
- In addition to conflict and violence, **[climate change](#) and natural disasters also triggered displacement** and exacerbated the vulnerability of displaced populations.
  - **Climate disasters caused 32.6 million internal displacements** throughout

2022 and 8.7 million of the people did not manage to return home by the end of the year.

- **Disaster related [internal displacement](#) accounted for more than half (54%)** of all new displacements in 2022.

#### ▪ **Displacement Burden on Poorer Countries:**

- **[Low- and middle-income countries](#) bore the greatest burden, with 90% of the displaced population originating from these nations.**
  - **These countries also hosted 76% of the world's refugees in 2022,** highlighting their disproportionate responsibility.
- **Least Developed Countries (LDCs) hosted 20% of the global refugee population,** with nations such as **Bangladesh, Chad, the DRC, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, and Yemen** facing significant challenges.

#### ▪ **Statelessness:**

- Statelessness exacerbates the difficulties faced by [refugees](#), denying them access to basic necessities like healthcare, education, and employment.
- An **estimated 4.4 million people worldwide were stateless or of undetermined nationality by the end of 2022,** a 2% increase from the year 2021.

People forced to flee worldwide (2012 - 2022)



## What are the Impacts of Forced Displacement?

#### ▪ **Impacts on Refugees:**

- **Economic Hardships:** Many refugees lose their livelihoods and economic stability upon displacement. They often face barriers in accessing employment opportunities, education, and financial resources in host countries.
  - Economic hardships can result in **poverty, limited access to essential goods and services, and increased vulnerability.**
- **Education Disruption:** For refugee children and youth, access to education is often disrupted or entirely denied.
  - **Limited educational opportunities can hinder their long-term development** and prospects for a better future, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and dependency.
- **Trauma and Emotional Distress:** Refugees often experience traumatic events during their displacement, including **violence, loss of loved ones, and the destruction of their homes and communities.**
  - This can lead to **severe emotional distress, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression.**
- **Physical Health Challenges:** Displaced refugees may face numerous health challenges, including inadequate access to healthcare, malnutrition, and exposure to unsanitary conditions.
  - **Lack of proper sanitation and healthcare facilities** can lead to the spread of diseases, further compromising their well-being.
- **Social and Cultural Challenges:** Refugees often face challenges in integrating into the host society due to **language barriers, cultural differences, and discrimination.**

- Social exclusion and marginalization can exacerbate their feelings of isolation and hinder their ability to rebuild their lives.

- **Impacts on Host Communities:**

- **Strain on Resources and Services:** The sudden influx of refugees can place significant pressure on host communities' resources, **including housing, healthcare facilities, schools, and public services.**
  - The **increased demand can overburden existing infrastructure**, leading to shortages and reduced access for both refugees and host community members.
- **Social Cohesion and Cultural Dynamics:** The arrival of refugees may create **social tensions and cultural dynamics within host communities.**
  - Differences in language, religion, and customs can generate misunderstandings and conflicts.
- **Increased Competition for Jobs:** The presence of refugees can lead to competition for employment opportunities in host communities.
  - Some host community members may **perceive refugees as taking away jobs or driving down wages, leading to tension and resentment.**

## What can be the Possible Solutions to Address Forced Displacement?

- **Humanitarian Assistance:** Providing immediate humanitarian aid such as food, shelter, healthcare, and clean water to displaced populations is crucial.
  - **International organisations, governments, and NGOs** should work together to ensure the **basic needs of displaced people are met.**
- **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding:** Addressing the root causes of forced displacement requires efforts to resolve conflicts and promote peace.
  - **Diplomatic negotiations, mediation, and peacebuilding initiatives** can help prevent further displacement by resolving the underlying issues.
- **Protection of Human Rights:** Upholding and protecting the human rights of displaced individuals is essential.
  - Governments should enact and enforce laws that protect the **rights of displaced people, including their right to safety, dignity, and access to basic services.**
- **Empowering Local Communities:** Strengthening the capacity of host communities to accommodate and support displaced populations can help mitigate tensions and promote social cohesion.
  - This can be done through **investments in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities.**
- **Regional and International Cooperation:** Forced displacement often requires a coordinated response from multiple countries and international organisations.
  - Collaboration between governments, regional bodies, and humanitarian agencies is crucial **to share responsibilities, resources, and expertise in addressing displacement challenges.**
  - This includes framing a legislation that **recognizes the rights of displaced people, establishes procedures for their protection,** and provides avenues for durable solutions such as **voluntary return, resettlement, and local integration.**

## What is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees?

- UNHCR, the **UN Refugee Agency**, is a global organisation dedicated to **saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution.**
- It was established by the [General Assembly of the United Nations](#) in 1950 in the **aftermath of the Second World War** to help the millions of people who had lost their homes.
  - Currently, UNHCR is governed by the **UNGA and the UN [Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#).**
- It is guided by and acts as the guardian of the [1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol](#).
  - **India is not a party** to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### **Mains:**

**Q.** “Refugees should not be turned back to the country where they would face persecution or human right violation”. Examine the statement with reference to ethical dimension being violated by the nation claiming to be democratic with open society. **(2021)**

**Q.** Rehabilitation of human settlements is one of the important environmental impacts which always attracts controversy while planning major projects. Discuss the measures suggested for mitigation of this impact while proposing major developmental projects. **(2016)**

**Source: DTE**

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