

NMMUN 2022

UNHCR- BACKGROUND GUIDE



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Greetings, delegates!

Welcome to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at the NMMUN 2022!

I'm Prisha Purohit, and I'm delighted to serve as the chair of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at the NMMUN 2022.

Being a delegate is particularly difficult and requires an enormous amount of research. This background information will serve as an introduction to the problem and help you with your research even more. I advise you to begin preparing as soon as possible.

The purpose of this Background Guide is to give you a brief overview and provide you with an introduction to the topic that will be debated upon in council.

Please keep in mind that this Guide is intended to be the starting point of your preparation and serves as an introduction to the institution and the topic. It is by no means exhaustive and should only be your first 'brick' of your preparation.

Once you have read this Guide, then your own preparation starts: looking into the political, social and economic background of your country, then researching the national interests and official positions that you will be representing during the conference.

We wish you the best of luck for the preparation period and look forward to getting to know your ideas and initiatives on solving the problems that the world is currently facing.

In case of any questions or queries, then do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We hope you will find it useful and are looking forward to meeting you at the MUN!

Happy researching!

Regards,
Prisha Purohit

Committee overview

In order to deal with the post-World War II refugee problem, UNHCR was established in 1950. The 1951 Refugee Convention set the parameters and rules for the agency's operations, which at first concentrated on Europeans devastated by the war. The scope of UNHCR's operations began to expand in the late 1950s as a result of the displacement brought on by other conflicts, including the Hungarian Uprising and the decolonization of Africa and Asia. The UNHCR worked globally, with the majority of its actions taking place in developing nations, in accordance with the 1967 Protocol to the Refugee Convention, which broadened the geographic and temporal scope of refugee support. By the agency's 65th birthday in 2015, more than 50 million refugees had received assistance from it globally.

Mandate

UNHCR's core mandate is to ensure the international protection of uprooted people worldwide. The organization works to protect the fundamental human rights of refugees and makes sure they won't be forcefully sent back to a place where they'll be mistreated. When circumstances allow, the UNHCR assists individuals with returning to their country of origin, integrating into refugee status countries, or resettling in other nations. Additionally, the UNHCR supports international refugee agreements, assists nations in creating asylum systems, and serves as a global watchdog over refugee issues.

Historical Background

UNHCR received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954 for its innovative efforts in Europe. But our subsequent major emergency did not take long to arise.

200,000 people escaped the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 by crossing the border into Austria. Considering the Hungarians to be "prima facie" refugees, UNHCR took the lead in arranging for their relocation. The response of humanitarian groups to subsequent refugee crises was influenced by this rebellion and its aftermath.

The first of several refugee crises on that continent occurred throughout the 1960s as a result of Africa's decolonization. Over the next two decades, we also assisted refugees in Asia and Latin America. We were awarded a second Nobel Peace Prize in 1981 for our increasingly widespread refugee support.

The UNHCR has assisted with significant refugee crises in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia during the beginning of the twenty-first century. Additionally, we have expanded our involvement in aiding stateless persons and been asked to use our knowledge to assist many people who have been domestically displaced by conflict. The 1951 Refugee Convention has been strengthened in several regions of the world, such as Africa and Latin America, by additional regional legal frameworks.

We celebrated our 70th anniversary in 2020. We have assisted well over 50 million refugees in successfully re-establishing their lives during our lifetimes.

Scope of the committee

- (a) Promoting the conclusion and ratification of international agreements for the protection of refugees, monitoring their implementation, and putting forward changes to those agreements.
- (b) Encouraging the implementation of any measures intended to improve the condition of refugees and lower the number in need of protection through specific agreements with Governments.
- (c) Supporting public and commercial initiatives to encourage voluntarily returning home or assimilating into new national communities.
- (d) Encouraging the admission of refugees to the territories of States, including those in the most need.

Issue I: Strengthening the capacity of integrating Ukrainian refugees into resettlement countries

Introduction

The wellbeing of families and children has been severely harmed by the war in Ukraine. Children's development and immediate and long-term health are impacted by prolonged exposure to distress. When seeking refuge, traveling, or seeking asylum, women and children run the risk of gender-based violence.

Up to 2.8 million of the 7.1 million individuals who have been internally displaced in Ukraine are children. Schools, kindergartens, hospitals, and water utilities have all been devastated.

There are disruptions in WASH, education, health, livelihoods, and social service support.

90% of the more than 4.5 million refugees—women and children—have fled to nearby nations and abroad in search of safety and urgent aid.

Including for unaccompanied and separated children, psychosocial services, and prevention of trafficking, sexual and labour exploitation and abuse, children in Ukraine and children living as refugees urgently need to be protected.

Key Terms and Concepts

1. *Resettlement*- Resettlement is a transfer of refugees from the country in which they have applied for asylum (for example, Ukraine), to another country which ultimately accepts them for permanent settlement.
2. *Refugee*- A person who has crossed an international boundary "due to a well-founded fear of persecution as a result of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion" is referred to as a "refugee." The meaning may be expanded to include people running from "events significantly disrupting public order" in some circumstances

UNHCR's role

Only the most vulnerable refugees are resettled globally by UNHCR. Fewer than 1% of the world's refugees get relocated.

In Ukraine, UNHCR no longer has a resettlement quota because there are fewer spaces available globally.

There is no requirement for nations to accept refugees for resettlement, nor is it a right. Resettlement of a refugee is contingent upon:

- the laws of the nations that receive refugees;
- entrance standards for resettlement nations;
- as well as the person's circumstance

The number of refugees residing in Ukraine is quite modest when compared to other nations that sponsor refugees. Resettlement nations also view Ukraine's conditions for integration as beneficial in many ways; as a result, they do not open quotas (places) for submission by UNHCR in Ukraine.

Background of the Issue

The eight-year-old conflict between the two nations was dramatically escalated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and this event marked a pivotal moment in European security history. After six months, a lot of defence and international political analysts have labelled the conflict as a significant strategic error by Russian President Vladimir Putin that has jeopardized his decades-long leadership.

Many commentators believe that there is little chance of a diplomatic settlement in the months to come and instead recognize the possibility of a deadly escalation, which may involve the use of a nuclear weapon by Russia. Ukraine's efforts to join Western political organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, have been accelerated by the war (NATO).

International Action

As with past forced migration across borders, the vast majority of Ukrainian refugees are being hosted by a small number of nearby countries. Poland, for instance, is housing more than 3.3 million refugees as of May 15, 2022, accounting for more than half of all displaced Ukrainians. Romania (901,696), Russia (800,104), Hungary (594,664), Republic of Moldova (461,742), and Slovakia are additional significant hosts (415,402). Their living circumstances in these nations are perilous, much like those of other

displaced migrants. For instance, in Poland, many migrants who don't have relatives or friends living there are staying in temporary housing facilities, which are mainly located in major cities like Warsaw, Kraków, or Wrocław.

Poland, on the other hand, acted swiftly to improve living conditions for Ukrainians in the nation. These measures included processing identifying documents so that Ukrainians could open bank accounts, giving them access to the job market, and allowing Ukrainian children to attend public schools. Then, in the middle of March, Poland passed a law allowing Ukrainians to reside and work there for a period of 18 months, subject to renewal. However, the major cities are already at capacity, and since early March, Poland has started moving Ukrainians to other regions of the nation or to other member states of the European Union (EU). Poland's ability to send Ukrainians to other EU nations was made possible by the EU's prompt decision to activate the Temporary Protection Directive in early March, allowing Ukrainian refugees to enter any of the EU's 27 member states and stay for at least one year, with the option of renewal for up to three years, with full access to the labour market and social benefits like education and health. By the end of April, there were some 380,000 Ukrainian refugees living in Germany, 100,000 in Italy, and countless others in Lithuania, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Spain, and Estonia. In the upcoming several months, these figures are probably going to reach the millions.

The positive relations till early 2000's

Since the creation of the USSR, Russia and Ukraine have been a part of it. However, a number of circumstances, including Gorbachev's policies and internal problems brought about by cultural diversity, contributed to the breakdown of the USSR in 1991, which is the only time that Russia and Ukraine had a breakup. The US, as the leader of NATO, saw this as a tremendous opportunity to strengthen the alliance's influence and might by bringing in the former USSR's members.

Even after Ukraine's disintegration, relations between the two countries remained largely stable and prosperous. Russia contributed to Ukraine's success, particularly in the military and economic spheres. All military vehicles, including tanks and equipment, as well as fighter aircraft like the MIG-21 were produced in Ukraine by Russia. In 1986, a nuclear catastrophe occurred at the Chernobyl power station, which was built by Russia in the Ukrainian city of Pripjat. The cultural ties between Eastern Ukrainians and Russians are still rather strong. Ukraine transferred all of its nuclear weapons and other

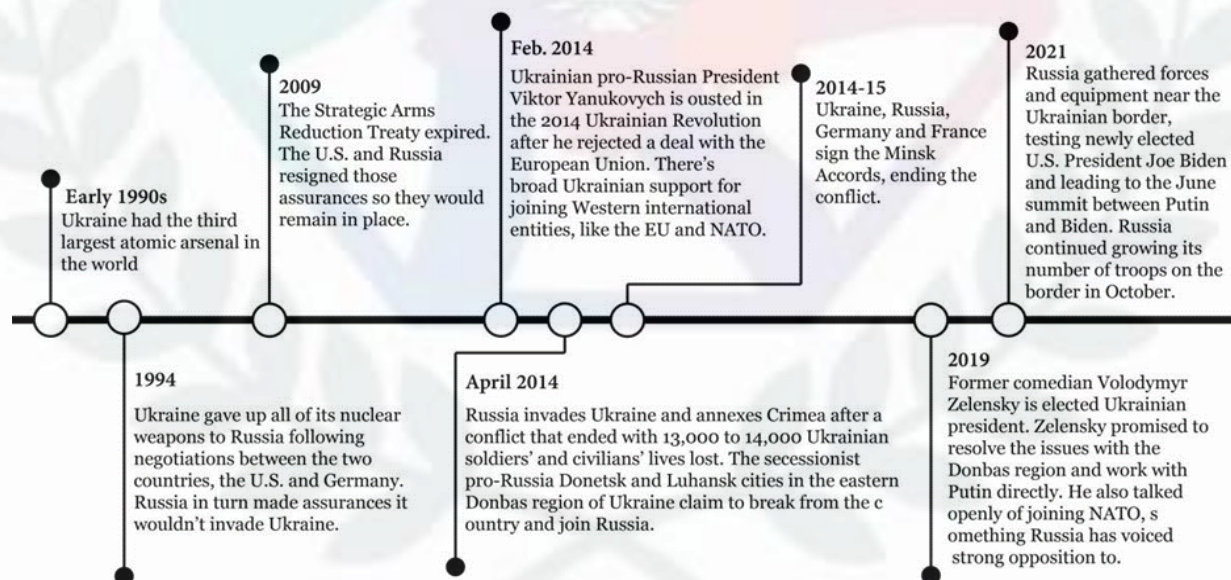
implements to Russia after signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would have altered Ukraine's current stance in the current dispute if those implements were still in its control.

The initiation of restrained relationships

Up until 2014, conditions in Ukraine were largely stable. Viktor Yanukovich was elected president in 2010. As a pro-Russian, he strongly disagreed with the strategic choice to admit Ukraine to the EU because, historically, EU states afterwards joined NATO under US control. The cultural relations with Russia deepened during Viktor's presidency. However, the 2014 presidential elections were lost by the pro-Russian president as a result of the EU's decision to prevent Ukraine from joining. However, the newly elected government was strongly in favour of Ukraine joining the EU, which infuriated Russia, which preferred that Ukraine remain independent of US influence. Russia attacked Ukraine as a result.

Timeline of the events

Timeline of recent history contributing to Russia-Ukraine conflict



Food supply in crisis

Food shortages are one of the most concerning supply chain problems brought on by the Russia-Ukraine war, and they are especially severe in low-income African nations. Over a third of the world's wheat production, a quarter of its barley production, and about 75% of its supply of sunflower oil are all produced in Ukraine and Russia; these are essential commodities for feeding people.

Impact on global economy

According to the OECD, the war in Ukraine would cost the global economy a "hefty price" in terms of slower growth, higher inflation, and possibly lasting damage to supply networks. The organization dropped its outlook for global GDP this year from 4.5% to 3% and quadrupled its inflation projection to roughly 9% for its 38 member nations. It anticipates a 2.8% growth rate in 2023.

Guiding questions

- ✓ what is the global consequence/ impact of the Russia- Ukraine conflict?
- ✓ Russia – Ukraine conflicts impact on the global economy?
- ✓ What are the countries current state/ situation due to the conflict?
- ✓ What is the Socio- economic consequences of the war?
- ✓ Impact on exports and imports on countries.
- ✓ Integration of Ukrainian refugees into the community.

Further research

- <https://currentaffairs.adda247.com/ukraine-and-russia-conflict-explained/>
- [How many Ukrainian refugees are there and where have they gone? - BBC News](#)
- <https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/ripple-effects-russia-ukraine-war-test-global-economies#:~:text=The%20Russia%2DUkraine%20war%20is,MIT%20Center%20for%20Transportation%20and>
- <https://www.rescue.org/article/ukraine-war-what-are-impacts-world-today>
- <https://www.coface.com/News-Publications/News/Economic-consequences-of-the-Russia-Ukraine-conflict-Stagflation-ahead>

Issue II: Displacement caused by climate emergency

Introduction

“We need to invest now in preparedness to mitigate future protection needs and prevent further climate caused displacement. Waiting for disaster to strike is not an option.”

Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Numerous consequences of climate change have the potential to lead to displacement, exacerbate living conditions, or hinder return for those who have already been displaced. Water which is one of the few natural resources that is getting progressively harder to find in many refugee-hosting regions of the world. Where temperatures are too hot and dry or too cold and wet, crops and cattle struggle to survive, endangering livelihoods. In these circumstances, climate change can function as a threat multiplier, escalating already-present tensions and increasing the likelihood of conflicts.

Over 20 million people relocate away from their homes and to other areas of their countries on average each year as a result of the hazards brought on by the intensifying and more frequent occurrence of extreme weather phenomena, such as cyclones, prolonged droughts, desertification, and sea-level rise.

In the context of climate change and natural calamities, some people are compelled to cross international borders and may occasionally require international protection. As a result, refugee and human rights laws are crucial in this situation.

Key terms and concepts

1. *Refugee*- A person who has crossed an international boundary "due to a well-founded fear of persecution as a result of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion" is referred to as a "refugee." The meaning may be expanded to include people running from "events significantly disrupting public order" in some circumstances.
2. *Climate refugee*- It refers to “persons displaced in the context of disasters and climate change.”

3. *Disaster displacement* - refers to "situations where people are compelled to leave their homes or places of usual residence because of a disaster or to avoid the effects of an immediate and foreseeable natural hazard." Such displacement happens as a result of impacted people being exposed to a natural hazard in an environment where they are also too susceptible and unprepared to deal with its effects.

UNHCR's role in addressing climate change and disaster- related displacement

The High Commissioner for Refugees appointed Andrew Harper to the position of Special Advisor on Climate Action in January 2020. He serves as a worldwide advocate, leads UNHCR's involvement in the climate emergency, and is in charge of providing oversight and expertise to help UNHCR develop its climate action agenda.

The climate action is focused on three main areas:

1. Law and policy

Delivering legal advice, guidance, and support to the global community in order to build improved protection for refugees and other persons forced to flee their homes due to disasters and climate change, as well as igniting global discussions on human rights.

2. Operations

Through solid collaborations, among other strategies, we work to increase the predictability of our engagement in order to foresee and be ready for catastrophes caused by climatic and other natural hazards. We are dedicated to lessening environmental deterioration in environments where people are displaced as well as boosting the preparation and resilience of displaced people and host communities to the consequences of climate change. The Refugee Environmental Protection Fund will fund effective reforestation and clean cooking initiatives in refugee circumstances that are vulnerable to climate change all around the world. Our operational responses take climate and environmental factors into account. Additionally, we are attempting to "green" our entire supply chain, as well as to enhance our supply planning, sourcing, manufacture, procurement, delivery, and lifecycle management of essential relief products and other UNHCR goods.

3. UNHCR's environmental footprint

Enhancing UNHCR's environmental sustainability through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the mitigation of adverse environmental effects.

Central America and Mexico

The UN Refugee Agency, has sent teams to help with relief efforts in Central America and southern Mexico, where hurricane and tropical storm Eta are reported to have affected three million people, making it one of the greatest weather-related disasters to hit the area in the last 20 years.

“The impact of the storm comes amid an already critical economic contraction in the region as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing further hardship to forcibly displaced people and host communities alike. Increased movements across borders are now more likely, including of people fleeing violence and persecution,” said Giovanni Bassu, UNHCR’s Regional Representative for Central America and Cuba.

Globally, changing temperatures are altering rainfall patterns. Climate change is intensifying rain and droughts in Central America, especially in the area known as the "dry corridor." Such events can make the poverty and instability that continue to push people out of their communities worse.

UNHCR is providing support throughout the region by increasing the number of available shelters and distributing items like facemasks, hygiene kits, soap, food kits, thermal blankets, mosquito nets, and solar lamps, among others.

Governments are urged by UNHCR to include those who have previously been displaced due to violence in their post-storm aid operations. The UNHCR's responses to the effects of Eta are consistent with our pledge to support the MIRPS Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework, which will assist governments in meeting the needs of those who have been forcefully displaced and the communities that have welcomed them.

International Action

From October 2013 UNHCR served as the group's coordinator. Its members included UNHCR, IOM, the Arab Network for Environment and Development, the UNDP, NRC, IDMC, Refugees International, the University of Liège, and the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNUEHS) (RAED). In preparation for the Paris climate change negotiations, that group expanded on the work of the previous IASC Group, produced joint submissions to the UNFCCC, and provided technical assistance to UNFCCC parties. Additionally, it served as a venue for the dissemination of research and publications and the conduct of high-level side events at significant international gatherings, particularly to make sure that the lessons learned from the Nansen Initiative process were applied to pertinent international processes.

During this time, there were other notable developments, such as the inclusion of crucial language on human mobility in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015.

Background of the issue

Many refugees and other individuals who have been uprooted due to climate change are receiving protection and aid from UNHCR, as well as assistance in building their resilience to future disasters.

Numerous effects of climate change have the potential to lead to displacement, aggravate living conditions, or prevent those who have already been displaced from returning. Water is one of the few natural resources that is getting progressively harder to find in many refugee-hosting regions of the world. Where temperatures are too hot and dry or too cold and wet, crops and cattle struggle to survive, endangering livelihoods. In these circumstances, climate change can function as a threat multiplier, escalating already-present tensions and increasing the likelihood of confrontations.

Over 20 million people relocate away from their homes and to other areas of their countries on average each year as a result of the hazards brought on by the intensifying and more frequent occurrence of extreme weather phenomena, such as cyclones, lengthy droughts, desertification, and sea-level rise.

In the context of climate change and natural calamities, some people are compelled to cross international borders and may occasionally require international protection. As a result, refugee and human rights laws are crucial in this situation.

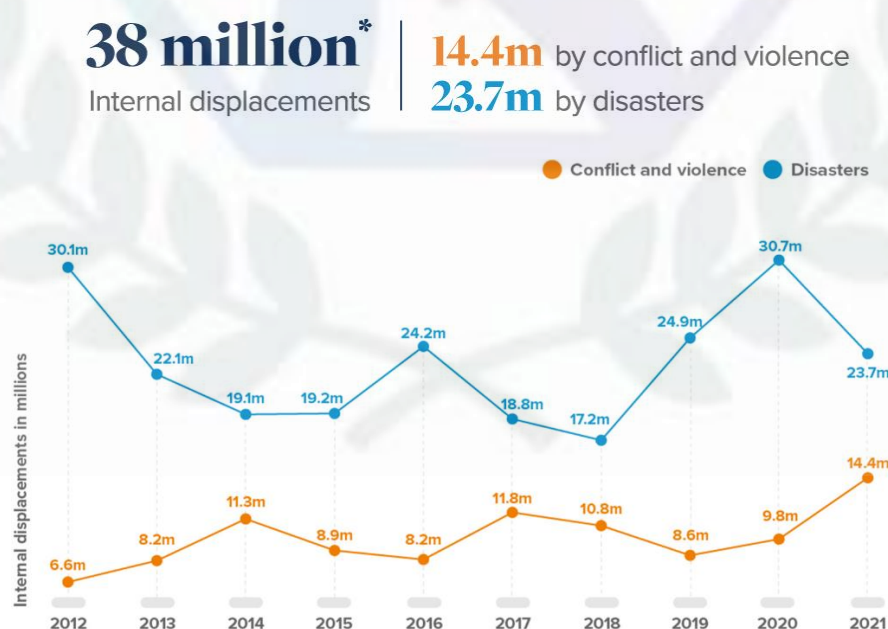
This growing concern is directly addressed in the Global Compact on Refugees, which was ratified by the UN General Assembly in December 2018. It acknowledges that "climate, environmental degradation and disasters increasingly interact with the drivers of refugee movements."

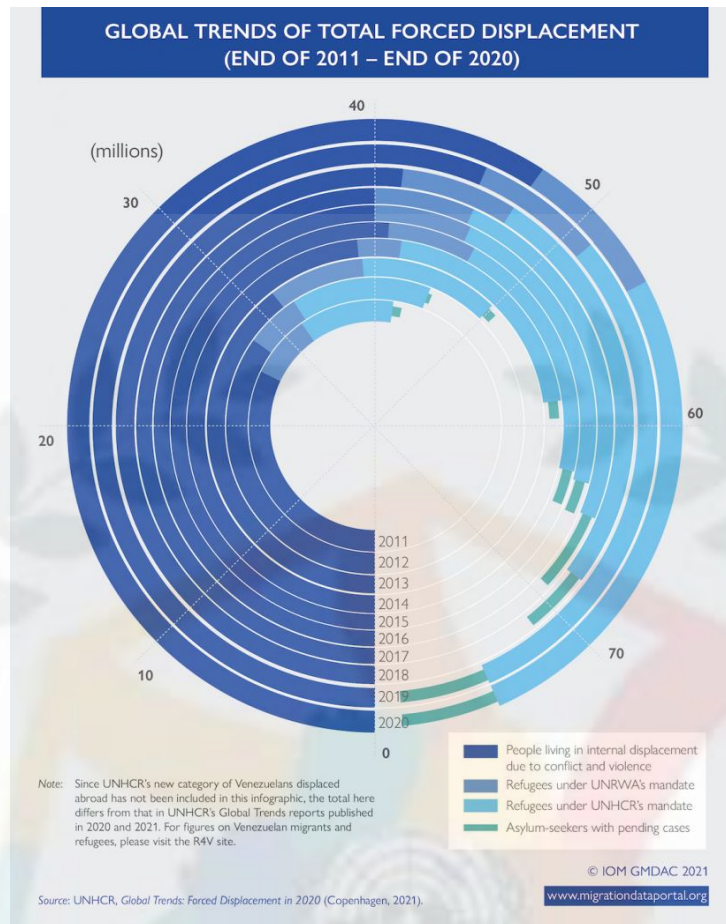
Effect of the issue on countries

Ethiopia faces significant internal displacement. In 2018, Ethiopia recorded the third highest number of new displacements worldwide, with 3,191,000 internally displaced persons identified. A significant portion of these displacements are conflict-induced, largely related to ethnic and border-based disputes. This has caused an alarming rate of the citizens to shift to other places in need of shelter; an issue causing citizens to be refugees.

The spread of COVID-19 and regulations to curb it has caused unemployment and has exacerbated the food insecurity situation in the country. Added to the atrocities of the issue, is unemployment, which is another major concern in Ethiopia.

Statistical data





Guiding Questions/ Suggested Moderated Caucus topics

1. What steps can we take to address the underlying causes of climate change?
2. How can we slow down the environmental deterioration that drives migration, such as desertification and sea level rise?
3. What steps can we take to improve our emergency readiness in the event of a natural disaster, such as a flood, hurricane, or fire?
4. How can we improve the climate resilience of the infrastructure in refugee camps?
5. How can we effectively involve refugee populations in our efforts to address the climate catastrophe and provide them with job opportunities?
6. How can we make it easier for refugees to access safe and dependable energy sources?

7. How can we encourage businesses and other private sector organizations to help build more environmentally friendly infrastructure in refugee camps?

Further research

- ✓ <https://www.internal-displacement.org/publications/disaster-displacement-a-global-review>
- ✓ <https://www.unhcr.org/climate-change-and-disasters.html#:~:text=UNHCR%20is%20providing%20protection%20and,thei r%20resilience%20to%20future%20disasters.>
- ✓ <https://www.unhcr.org/596f25467.pdf>
- ✓ <https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/why-unhcr-is-taking-action-on-climate-change-displacement/>
- ✓ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2021/11/618a301d5/climate-change-emergency-everywhere.html>