



**United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees**



AGENDA:

**Reinforcing Global Measures to promote the Inclusivity of
Refugees with special emphasis on Agenda 2030 and
providing support to Host Nations.**

UNHCR



STUDY GUIDE



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LETTER FROM THE BUREAU

Dear Delegates!

Namaste,

It is with immense pleasure that we invite you to the 10th Shishukunj Model United Nations Conference. As bureau members, we are committed to maintaining the high standard of excellence that has been our tradition. We are privileged to serve as the Bureau of “The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.” Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or concerns; we are here to help whenever you need.

For this year's conference, our agenda is “Reinforcing Global Measures to promote the Inclusivity of Refugees with special emphasis on Agenda 2030 and providing support to Host Nations.” We will be discussing and deliberating upon already existing international frameworks, provision of support for host nations and addressing problems like xenophobia and healthcare.

The Bureau would like to make it absolutely clear that any form of plagiarism or A.I. shall not at all be tolerated. Delegates must submit their **own original work** and will be required to put forth all the resources they have utilized. This guide is written to provide you with a kick start with your research process, the bureau expects all of you to dive deeper into the agenda after you have read the **entire guide thoroughly**, explore the web, and then gather useful resources to share with us and the entire committee.

This guide is an indispensable resource for all delegates; thus, it is crucial for all delegates to read the guide extensively and it is essential for all delegates to be well versed with all the topics with respect to their portfolios. Fruitful argumentations require thorough research, persuasive reasoning, and a confident presentation of the facts. Just concentrate on your research and confidently communicate your findings; if done well, your ideas will undoubtedly be understood. We can't wait to meet you all and watch your brilliant brains come to life at once.

Wishing you all the very best for the conference,

Yours Sincerely,

Aachman Mishra – Chairperson

Anika Vyas – Vice Chairperson

Pihu Sood – Rapporteur



INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), also known as the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organization committed to saving lives, protecting rights, and building a better future for people who are forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, or persecution. Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1950 in the aftermath of the Second World War, UNHCR was created to help millions of displaced people who had lost their homes.

Today, UNHCR operates in 136 countries, providing life-saving assistance such as shelter, food, water, and medical care to those forced to flee, many of whom have no one else to turn to. The agency defends the right of displaced individuals to seek safety and works to help them find a place to call home and rebuild their lives.

In the long term, UNHCR collaborates with governments to improve and monitor refugee and asylum policies and laws, ensuring that human rights are upheld.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, acting under the authority of the General Assembly as well as the Economic and Social Council, is mandated to provide international protection and humanitarian assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). It aims to secure their rights and find lasting solutions, including voluntary repatriation, integration, and resettlement. The agency's mandate also includes supporting stateless persons and those whose nationality is disputed.



KEY TERMS

- 1) **Refugee:** a person who has been forced to leave his/her country for political or religious reasons, or because there is a war, not enough food, etc.
- 2) **Refugee Influx:** a sudden, large-scale arrival of refugees into a particular country or region.
- 3) **Refoulement:** the forcible return of refugees or asylum seekers to a country where they are liable to be subjected to persecution.
- 4) **Xenophobia:** a fear or hatred of foreign people and cultures.
- 5) **Asylum:** protection that a government gives to people who have left their own country, usually because they were in danger for political reasons.
- 6) **Arbitrary Arrest:** the imprisonment or detention of a person without a legal basis and without following proper legal procedures.
- 7) **Detention:** the act of stopping a person leaving a place, especially by keeping him/her in prison
- 8) **International Organization:** alliances formed by countries to work together on shared global concerns. Their mission often centers around promoting peace, protecting human rights, and helping countries grow and recover, especially in times of crisis.
- 9) **State Actors:** a sovereign state or its official representatives, such as governments, militaries, and intelligence agencies, that act on behalf of the state
- 10) **Non – State Actors:** groups like NGOs, humanitarian organizations, and civil society networks that operate independently of governments. Though they don't hold political power, their presence on the ground makes a powerful difference, especially when people's lives are at stake



PAST RESOLUTIONS FOR PROTECTION OF REFUGEES

1. THE 1951 REFUGEE CONVENTION AND THE 1967 PROTOCOL:

Established after World War II to help people who were forced to flee their countries because of war, The 1951 Refugee Convention is the most important international agreement that protects the rights of refugees. It explains who qualifies as a refugee and lists the rights that they are entitled to receive. One of the most important orders of this convention is non-refoulement, which means that a refugee must not be sent back to a place where their freedom or life is threatened. Initially this convention was for the citizens of Europe alone, but the 1967 Protocol removed this restriction and made the convention into a global measure.

2. NEW YORK DECLARATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS:

It was adopted unanimously by all 193 UN member states in September 2016. It establishes a commitment to protect people who are forced to flee their homes because of war, violence, or other dangers. The declaration states that all refugees and migrants have rights which must not be violated and that they should be treated with dignity. It also encourages countries to work together to help these refugees and to support the countries that are hosting them.

3. GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES:

This was adopted in 2018 as a result of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. The main aim of the Global Compact is to reduce the pressure on countries that are a host to large refugee populations. It assists refugees in becoming independent, provides opportunities for their resettlement, and makes it easier for refugees to return home when it is safe. It also encourages global cooperation and fair responsibility sharing between countries.



INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

Displacement due to conflict, climate change, and persecution continues to increase day by day, creating complex challenges for both refugees and the countries that host them. As of June 2024, UNHCR reports that 122.6 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide. This rising number highlights the need for global cooperation and international efforts that support not only the social, economic, and cultural integration of refugees but also the strengthening of host countries and communities. Hence, deriving our agenda statement as **‘Reinforcing Global Measures to promote the Inclusivity of Refugees with special emphasis on Agenda 2030 and providing support to Host.’**

Refugees have to deal with a lot, from leaving their entire lives behind to facing consistent discrimination, denial of rights and services and exclusion in all spheres of life. Key areas of action to improve their lives and promote inclusivity include protecting human rights, ensuring effective and inclusive registration systems, and providing access to essential services such as healthcare and education. These align closely with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which promotes inclusive growth, resilience, and shared responsibility in addressing displacement.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) plays a central role in supporting the inclusion of refugees in national development plans and advancing long-term, sustainable solutions. This approach not only uplifts displaced populations but also strengthens host communities, fostering mutual development and stability.

AGENDA 2030

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are components of the Agenda 2030 which was developed by the United Nations and was launched during the **UN General Assembly on September 25, 2015. The 2030 Agenda expresses a 15-year vision** to eradicate extreme poverty and enhance renewable resources to better the quality of life of every individual globally.

Although improvements are being made, the attainment of these objectives is slower and less comprehensive than required.

The two primary principles of the 2030 Agenda are to safeguard human rights for all and to ensure coverage for everyone as, “leave no one behind.”

The UNHCR plays a critical role in improving the 2030 Agenda. UNHCR also promotes partnerships with governments, UN agencies, and local communities to integrate humanitarian action with long-term development strategies, ensuring that the vision of a more equal, and sustainable world becomes a reality for everyone.

This global commitment is outlined through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



SUPPORTING AND STRENGTHENING HOST NATIONS

A host nation is any country that offers temporary residence, protection and resources to refugees that have been forced to flee their homes due to various situations in their countries. People may be forced to leave their country behind and seek refuge somewhere else due to circumstances like natural disasters, armed conflicts, and immense human rights violations. In such situations, welcoming a huge number of refugees may consequently turn into a burden for host nations. Hence it becomes essential to gather support for host nations and encourage them to strengthen themselves, while promoting responsibility sharing between countries.

REDUCING THE BURDEN OF REFUGEE INFLUXES ON HOST NATIONS

A refugee influx will quite clearly have serious effects on the host country's developmental, economic and social landscape. Refugee influxes lead to strain on infrastructure and resources, create competition for jobs and basic facilities, give rise to social tensions, and can have immense economic impacts.

What causes refugee influxes?

Refugee influxes happen when people no longer feel safe living in their home country, hence forcing them to flee to other places. The reasons for this feeling amongst people can be war, natural disasters, human rights violations, etc. Situations like these make it impossible for people to live with security, causing people to seek refuge somewhere else.

Large populations of refugees will have numerous needs and demands like good healthcare, sanitation, housing, education, nutritious food, clean water, etc. All of this puts immense pressure on a country's existing infrastructure, leading to problems like overcrowding of hospitals and refugee camps, shortages of basic necessities like food and water, reduced qualities of services, all the while increasing costs for both refugees and local communities. For example, due to the immense influx of Venezuelan refugees into Colombia (approximately 2.8 million), the local infrastructure has been significantly strained. Hospitals are forced to operate beyond capacity, hence tampering with the proper needs of patients, Colombian schools are unable to accommodate Venezuelan children, causing about 260,000 refugee children not receiving access to education.

As refugees also try to search for jobs in order to support themselves, the competition for jobs between locals and refugees becomes unavoidable, since there's a fixed number of jobs available but the candidates wanting that job have tremendously increased. This results in large scale unemployment, which leads to poverty, forces people to take up petty jobs and work for meagre incomes and potentially takes away jobs from locals. This competition creates a situation where refugees who could have been assets to the host country's economy end up becoming liabilities due to not having jobs or ways to support themselves. Increased competition for resources and job opportunities along with pre-existing mindsets amongst local populations becomes a factor in increasing social tensions and stimulating violence against refugees.



The impact of refugee influxes on a host country's economy can play out in one of two ways. Either the refugees will find places in the workforce and contribute positively to the economy by earning or they'll remain unemployed and put a strain on public finances, hence becoming a burden on the country's economy. Governments of several countries provide refugees with essential services like housing and healthcare, but due to the remaining unemployed, refugees find it impossible to contribute back to the country's economy. Similarly, public welfare programs may stop functioning properly if a large number of refugees depend on them without contributing. For example, Germany has several public welfare systems, "Bürgergeld" or the "Citizen's Benefit" being one of them. This is a benefit system that ensures that unemployed people and families with low income receive adequate financial support. As of 2024, nearly 5.4 million people receive aid from Bürgergeld, out of which 47% are non-germans. This increased focus and spending on welfare programs has raised concerns about whether these can continue, especially since many refugees are not working and contributing back to the economy. This shows that sometimes, financial support becomes one-sided hence burdening host nations. In scenarios like this, it becomes essential to find out ways to reduce the burden on host nations.

STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR HOST COUNTRIES

As outlined in the previous section, refugee influxes tend to become an unavoidable burden on a host country's economy and society. This may lead to countries welcoming lesser and lesser refugees as time progresses, or reduced attention and help being given to refugees. For example, Lebanon used to be host to over 1.5 million Syrian refugees, but in 2015 they stopped registering new refugees due to excessive strain on the economy and overburdening on public services ¹. Such situations make it difficult for host countries to take in refugees in large numbers, but these very situations highlight why it is essential to gather international support for host countries.

As discussed in The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and The Global Compact on Refugees, global cooperation and fair responsibility sharing are essential to improve the lives of refugees while simultaneously easing pressure on host countries. This global cooperation becomes vital to aid countries which provide refuge to large populations while also falling under the under-developed or developing countries category, for example Uganda and Sudan. Both of these countries host enormous numbers of refugees, Uganda with over 1.8 million² and Sudan with over 900,000³. Supporting such large numbers of refugees very easily turns into a burden for these countries because both of them qualify as low-middle-income countries hence making it difficult for them to provide aid and support to refugees.

Support can be provided by assisting host countries with humanitarian aid, food, water, facilities in refugee camps, education opportunities, etc. Global cooperation can improve refugee's access to these services, hence making the lives of refugees better.

UNHCR collaborated with **Education Cannot Wait** in Uganda to ensure that education is received by refugee and host community children. They also focus on promoting inclusive

¹ <https://www.fmreview.org/return/fakhoury-ozkul/>

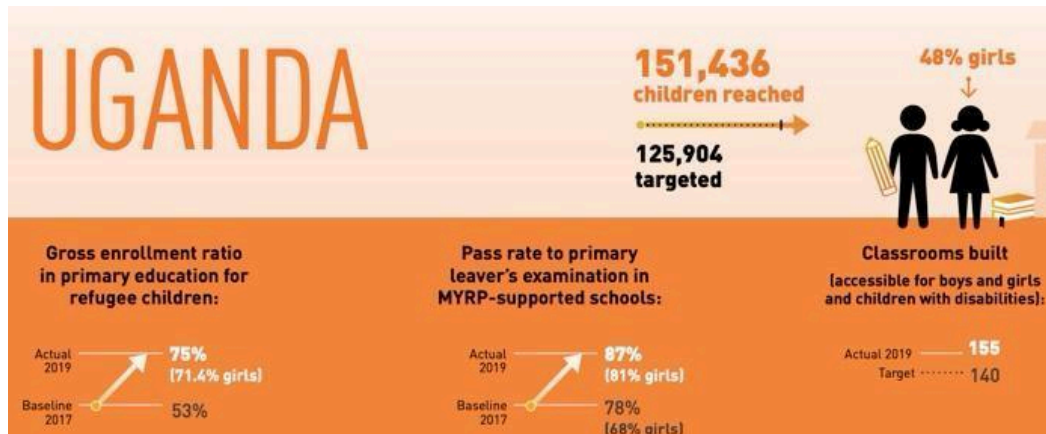
² <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/uganda>

³ <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/sudan>



education by spreading education to children with disabilities. Their help made it possible to increase refugee enrollment rates from **53% in 2017 to 75% in 2019** ⁴.

International support allowed UNHCR and WHO to improve healthcare and more basic facilities for Rohingya refugees and locals in Bangladesh. They have constructed thousands of public washrooms and water points for refugees in order to reduce the risks of health problems ⁵. This data proves that international support to host nations not only improves the well-being of refugees, but also boosts development and integration of refugees into local populations.



⁴ <https://www.educationcannotwait.org/annual-report/pdfs/ECW2019-Annual-Results-Report.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/in/emergencies/rohingya-emergency>



STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR REFUGEE INCLUSIVITY

ADDRESSING VIOLATIONS AGAINST REFUGEES AND ENSURING HUMAN RIGHTS

“No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark. You have to understand, no one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land.” This quote conveys a disheartening truth about our world, that every day, all over the world, some people make one of the most difficult decisions in their lives: to leave their homes in search of a safer, better life. But sometimes the hopes they had for this ‘better life’ get crushed and they have to deal with the harsh reality in which refugees face constant discrimination, denial of rights and services and exclusion in all spheres of life.

The violations that refugees have to face are extremely saddening ranging from lack of basic services to dealing with violence and exploitation. They often have to live without adequate food, clean water, proper shelter and medical aid. Refugees, especially women and children, become vulnerable to gender based violence, human trafficking, forced labour and exploitation. Today, about 50% of the world’s refugees are girls and women, who not only have to deal with the consistent fear of not having a home but also trying to keep themselves safe in today’s harsh world ⁶. Other than this, a lot of times refugees are denied entry into countries hence violating their right to seek asylum. Further some countries forcibly return refugees to places where their freedom and life is endangered, hence going against the principles of non-refoulement, which was an essential feature of The 1951 Refugee Convention. Refugees also face discrimination, hostility and exclusion amongst host communities. They may be denied access to healthcare, education and employment because of this issue. For example, due to the rise of anti-refugee sentiments all across Europe, For example, citizens of Poland who once used to welcome and support Ukrainian refugees, have started protesting against jobs and resources being taken away from them by these refugees, leading to incidents of physical assaults and attacks ⁷. A lot of these discriminations against refugees is due to xenophobia, which will be discussed in later sections.

This scenario of ever increasing violations against refugees makes it essential to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect and that their rights are guaranteed to them. Human rights of refugees can be improved by looking into pre-existing legal frameworks and improving them by reducing loopholes.

⁶ <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-refugees-and-migrants-0>

⁷

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/europe/are-polish-attitudes-to-ukrainian-refugees-souring/articleshow/119070294.cms>



EFFECTIVENESS OF UNIVERSAL REFUGEE REGISTRATION SYSTEMS IN GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES

Universal refugee registration systems are organized ways to record information about displaced people so that aid can be given quickly, fairly, and without mistakes. They help agencies know who needs help and ensure resources reach the right people.

Refugee registration systems are absolutely essential to humanitarian efforts. Without them, providing aid would be a total mess, lacking efficiency and fairness. These systems make sure that every refugee is recognized, counted, and supported equally⁸.

Registration and identification of refugees are essential processes that not only help individuals involved but also support states hosting them. These processes enable governments and humanitarian groups to keep track of how many refugees have arrived, while also allowing refugees access to basic assistance and protection. Registration is especially important for quickly identifying individuals with specific needs like the elderly or those with disabilities, so they can be provided the right support services. It acts as a safeguard against refoulement, arbitrary arrests, and detention, and is crucial for keeping families together by helping to reunite separated children with their loved ones⁹. The personal information gathered during registration provides the detailed insights necessary for planning essential services such as food, shelter, water, healthcare, and sanitation. Additionally, registration data helps maintain the integrity of refugee protection systems and is a key tool in preventing fraud, corruption, and serious crimes like human trafficking

All of this shows how important proper refugee registration systems are in improving the lives of refugees while simultaneously assisting host nations in ensuring the safety of refugees. Furthermore, it would be extremely difficult and unfair to help refugees without refugee registration systems. While some people may receive assistance frequently, others may not receive any. Families may get separated, and people who require extra care may be overlooked. It would be far more difficult to safeguard refugees and give them the assistance they need without proper documentation.

⁸ <https://www.unhcr.org/registration-guidance/>

⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/us/what-we-do/protect-human-rights/protection/registration-and-identity-management>



ENSURING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION

1. Global Challenges to Refugee Healthcare:

Refugees face numerous obstacles in accessing healthcare after displacement. Due to a lack of proper legal documentation, many are denied basic medical services. Language barriers and unfamiliarity with local health systems further hinder their ability to seek timely treatment. Additionally, healthcare facilities in camps or temporary settlements are often far away, overcrowded, or poorly equipped. These factors lead to insufficient care for chronic illnesses, emergencies, mental health issues, and maternal health, creating serious risks for refugee populations.

a. Global Initiatives:

Governments and international organizations have responded to these pressing healthcare issues by launching a number of initiatives to help refugees receive the care they terribly need. Maternal care helps pregnant women and new mothers in vulnerable situations, portable clinics visit overcrowded or difficult-to-reach camps, vaccination drives aim to prevent disease outbreaks, and mental health services attempt to treat severe trauma. In order to provide refugees with more equal and consistent access to healthcare over time, there is also a growing attempt to include them into national healthcare systems.

b. Loopholes in These Global Initiatives

1. The effectiveness and reach of healthcare services are restricted by logistical challenges and a lack of funding.
2. Legal obstacles frequently prevent undocumented refugees from receiving official medical care.
3. Overcrowding, shortages of staff, and a lack of essential resources are common problems in healthcare facilities.
4. Language and cultural differences create barriers that prevent refugees from fully utilizing healthcare services

2. Global Challenges to Refugee Education

Poverty, displacement, and war limit refugee youth's access to education. The majority are in areas that have been damaged by conflict or lack permanent schools. When classes are offered, they are frequently taught by overworked and under trained teachers in languages that the refugees do not understand. For example, in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh, many classes are taught in Bengali or English, which most Rohingya children do not speak fluently. The teachers are often local volunteers with limited training, making it even harder for the children to understand the lessons and keep up with their education. Additional barriers to access include the lack of sufficient classrooms, desks, and textbooks, and the expense of uniforms and transportation with absence of identification documents. Many young refugees lack a clear future because of these difficulties which make secure and valuable education impossible.

a. Global initiatives

International organizations are implementing initiatives like UNICEF's "School-in-a-Box," which rapidly creates makeshift classrooms, and accelerated teacher training, which matches local educators with refugee teachers, to address these problems. Remote locations can be reached with the use of technologies like radio lessons and solar-powered tablets. School meal programs and cash salaries encourage families to place a high value on education, especially for girls. By incorporating refugees into their public school systems, host nations like Uganda, Turkey, and Colombia have achieved significant progress. In order to promote more inclusive and sustainable education, these countries have increased teacher paychecks, created bilingual curriculum, and allowed refugee students to sit for national exams with the help of international funding from the World Bank, EU, and UN agencies.

b. Loopholes in these Global Initiatives

1. Teacher salaries and resources are disrupted by the short-term and irregular funding for refugee education.
2. Overcrowding in refugee-accepting schools usually results in a lack of textbooks, exam slots, and counseling services.
3. Due to their lack of legal documentation, many refugee teenagers are able to attend classes but are unable to obtain the official certifications required for advanced education or skilled employment.
4. In many refugee settings, poor internet connectivity and erratic electricity make digital learning initiatives difficult.
5. The facilities, security, and safety of permanent schools are frequently absent from temporary classrooms and makeshift learning environments.
6. The infrastructure and resources of host nations might not be sufficient to accommodate the growing number of refugee students.
7. Sometimes, cultural and linguistic barriers keep refugees from taking full advantage of the educational opportunities that are available.





ENHANCING THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND NON-STATE ACTORS

Millions of refugees are currently displaced due to persecution, war, political violence, and disasters. They are more than just numbers; there are broken families, children growing up without stability, and people who are still dealing with the agony of everything they have lost. They frequently lose access to even the most basic medical treatment, food, clean water, and a safe place to sleep as a result of displacement. Even a basic sense of safety fades into the past for many. Schools are out of reach, mental health support is almost nonexistent, and hygiene facilities are often limited or unsafe. In the face of these deep human struggles, international organizations and non-state actors step in where local systems can no longer cope. Their role becomes vital- not just in offering services, but in recognizing and responding to the dignity, pain, and resilience of people caught in crises. They are often the ones who show up when no one else can, bringing attention, care, and structure to situations that feel forgotten. Their presence is not just operational- it is human, and it is necessary ¹⁰.

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN REFUGEE PROTECTION AND RESPONSE

Refugees are forced to flee their home countries due to war, political conflict, persecution, natural disasters, or climate change. These situations make it impossible for them to live safely in their own countries. As a result, they are forced to cross borders and seek shelter in other nations, often with no belongings and in very poor conditions.

Refugees are forced to flee their countries due to war, conflict, persecution, disasters, or climate change, making it unsafe to remain at home. They often arrive in foreign nations with nothing, living in poor conditions. Lacking food, water, shelter, and healthcare, they face extreme vulnerability and uncertainty. Their situation demands urgent attention to ensure access to basic aid and protection, and to prevent further suffering. International organizations play a critical role in supporting refugees by coordinating efforts and stepping in when local capacities are limited. They bring together countries and groups to address common challenges, facilitating the sharing of information and providing support where resources are scarce. These organizations contribute to the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups, such as refugees, by adopting regulations and guidelines. Their work guarantees that aid reaches individuals in need in a fair and systematic fashion, even though they might not always offer direct aid. These organizations play a crucial role in coordinating emergency responses and attending to their urgent needs.

¹⁰ <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>

THE ROLE OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN ADDRESSING GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY

When a refugee is often forced to flee their homes due to conflict, persecution, or natural disaster. In the rush to escape danger, they leave behind not only their belongings and livelihoods but also their access to food and other basic necessities. This sudden loss places them in an extremely vulnerable position, where survival becomes a daily struggle. Among the most serious problems they face is food insecurity. Regular meals become uncommon and access to nutritious food is almost nonexistent. Long gaps between meals are common, leading to hunger and weakened immune systems.

Children, pregnant women, and the elderly are especially at risk, often suffering from malnutrition and related health complications. For many refugees, eating becomes less about nutrition and more about survival, forcing them into a cycle of dependency, uncertainty, and declining health. In these circumstances, non-state actors play a vital role in ensuring refugees have consistent access to safe and sufficient food ¹¹.

For example, Beginning in 2015, the Venezuelan migration crisis compelled millions of people to escape shortages and economic collapse. Many went to Brazil, Peru, and Colombia for safety. To tackle hunger and malnutrition among displaced families, humanitarian organizations such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and regional NGOs set up community kitchens, organized distribution, and supplied essential food relief ^{12 13}. Children are at high risk, with more than 3 million suffering from malnutrition. Non-state actors like World Vision, Save the Children have played a crucial role in delivering emergency food and nutrition services. However, ongoing violence and restricted access continue to challenge relief efforts. Hence, the role of non-state actors in addressing global food security is vital ¹⁴.



¹¹

<https://www.theguardian.com/unicef-australia-survival-to-safety/2024/dec/18/how-to-help-beyond-the-emergency-long-term-support-brings-hope-to-children-in-crisis-zones>

¹² <https://www.unhcr.org/emergencies/venezuela-situation>

¹³ <https://www.wfp.org/countries/venezuela-bolivarian-republic>

¹⁴ <https://www.wvi.org/>

ADDRESSING XENOPHOBIA AND PROMOTING TOLERANCE

Global displacement is now reaching historic levels with over 117 million people forcibly displaced by the end of 2023 the challenge of xenophobia has grown more urgent than ever ¹⁵. Xenophobia, defined as the fear or hostility toward individuals perceived as foreign, often targets refugees due to their visible cultural, ethnic, or religious differences ¹⁶. It takes place in many forms: hate speech, discrimination, exclusion from public services, and even physical violence. These hostile attitudes severely undermine refugee protection, integration, and their dignity.

Xenophobia is pervasive in no particular place or political environment. Across different continents, aggressive public opinion against refugee populations is constructed merely through social anxieties, economic fears, and polarizing rhetoric. Typically, in most instances, refugees are misrepresented as a burden, a threat to national identity, or an insecurity threat. Such a culture of suspicion and intolerance not only inflicts psychological damage on uprooted individuals but also undermines the social fabric in host communities.

Global surveys show mixed attitudes toward refugees. For example, a 2024 UNHCR–Ipsos study found that 73% of adults across 52 countries support allowing people fleeing war or persecution to seek refuge. Support is especially high in long-time hosting countries (e.g. Kenya 93%, Uganda 92%). About half of the respondents support policies for refugee integration (education, work, healthcare), and roughly 77% back family reunification. These positive figures (global averages) show broad public empathy, but they coexist with significant concerns. About one-third of people express doubts that refugees will successfully integrate or contribute positively. This ambivalence – visible in surveys – often reflects media narratives and political discourse: where media emphasizes economic or security “burdens,” fear tends to rise. UNHCR notes that public concerns about refugees’ impact on jobs, culture, or services were common in countries with large refugee populations. These attitudes have real consequences: for instance, research on refugee education inclusion has found that “xenophobic sentiment and negative attitudes” in a society can hinder political will and practical steps to include refugee children in schools. Humanizing images and stories in the media can counter xenophobic stereotypes while reiterating the humanity of displaced people.



discrimination.¹⁷

This subtopic is central to the UNHCR’s mission and deeply aligned with the values of **Agenda 2030**. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly **Goal 4 (Quality Education)**, **Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities)**, and **Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)**, call for inclusive societies that uphold human rights, celebrate diversity, and reject

¹⁵<https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>

¹⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/topic/racism-xenophobia-intolerance>

¹⁷ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



As delegates, it is your responsibility to critically examine the ways in which xenophobia erodes refugee protection and why tolerance must be enhanced at societal, institutional, and international levels. You will examine causes, impacts, and institutions that promote intolerance, with particular reference to the role of the **media** and the **education systems** in reinforcing public opinion.

This is not just a refugee policy crisis—it is an assault on who we are as human beings. To wrestle with xenophobia is not just to defend the displaced, it is to determine what sort of international community we want to build.

THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN SHAPING PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AROUND REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

Media outlets and mediums are among the most powerful opinion leaders of the public. How refugees and migrants are understood – in the media, on the evening news, in online outlets, and on social media – primarily decides if and how the public sees them with sympathy or suspicion. Historically, media framing has swung between depictions of refugees as victims in need and portrayals as potential “threats.” For example, in many countries the 2015–2016 migration crises were covered with sensational headlines about surging refugee flows, sometimes linking newcomers to crime or economic strain. UNHCR’s own case studies have documented how negative media reporting – such as labeling refugees as “militants” or security risks – can amplify fear. In 2024, Monterroso, Spain welcomed 120 asylum seekers from Mali. Local media highlighted integration efforts—like cultural events and a football club’s support—shifting public sentiment from fear to solidarity. Coverage portrayed refugees as contributors, not burdens. In 2025, Cate Blanchett’s Displacement Film Fund further empowered refugee voices, showing how storytelling and balanced reporting can humanize migrants and reshape public attitudes globally ^{18 19}. Such coverage can normalize xenophobic rhetoric: when news stories repeatedly associate refugees with violence or illegal behavior, audiences may often come to believe those stereotypes.

However, the media can also play a positive role. Journalistic standards and codes of ethics encourage accurate, balanced reporting. Media that highlight refugee stories – their journeys, skills, and contributions – can foster empathy. In fact, some press coverage and documentary projects have deliberately showcased refugees’ successes. The Ipsos survey notes that in Latin America and parts of Africa, where refugees are often portrayed more positively, public support is especially high ²⁰. Moreover, refugee and diaspora communities increasingly use the media themselves to influence narratives. Social media platforms allow refugees and migrants to share personal stories directly with global audiences. For example, Venezuelan immigrants in the U.S. have created social-media content to counter anti-immigrant sentiment. One High Country News report describes Venezuelan social-media “content creators” running an Instagram account (“Los Buenos Somos Más”) to highlight positive stories of immigrants’ achievements. These efforts respond to rising “anti-immigration

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<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/sep/13/theyre-setting-an-example-for-us-the-small-spanish-town-welcoming-refugees>

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2025/may/24/cate-blanchett-launches-grant-displaced-film-makers>

²⁰

<https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/unhcr-ipsos-survey-shows-enduring-public-support-refugees-alongside-stark-variations-attitudes>

rhetoric” – as the article notes. In 2024 Venezuelans in the U.S. faced social-media campaigns blaming them for crime and “unchecked migration.”. By posting videos of entrepreneurs and scholarship students, these creators attempt to counterbalance hate speech (demonstrating that “good [immigrants] outnumber the bad”) ²¹.

Social media presents a double-edged sword. On one hand, disinformation and algorithmic echo chambers can intensify xenophobia. False rumors (e.g. that refugees are getting special benefits or causing crime) can spread rapidly, shaping hostile opinions before factual corrections appear. Studies have shown that more frequent exposure to negative media coverage of migrants positively correlates with more negative attitudes toward them. On the other hand, social networks also offer tools for fact-checking, awareness campaigns, and building transnational understanding. The UN and other organizations work with journalists and platforms to promote accurate reporting: for example, UNHCR provides media guides for refugee-safe terminology and urges journalists to humanize refugees rather than demonize them. Importantly, public trust in media can modulate impacts: regions where people trust public media tend to show lower acceptance of discrimination ²².

In recent years, the rise of hate speech online has drawn attention. UN reports and OSCE/ODIHR²³ guidelines stress that language used in media and online must avoid dehumanization. Negatively framing refugees (e.g. as an “invasion” or “waves”) can fuel anxiety. Yet there are countervailing trends: many mainstream and independent outlets have highlighted refugees’ cultural contributions, entrepreneurial activities or resilience. Overall, the media shapes a “complex picture” – as the Ipsos report puts it, while significant variance across countries means that media narratives strongly color local perceptions. In short, the media serve both as catalysts of fear and as educators: “sensationalized or biased reporting can entrench xenophobia, while balanced and humanizing coverage can build understanding.” The UNHCR-Ipsos surveys make clear that listening to media-driven public sentiment (both positive and negative) is essential for knowing where attitudes stand.



Key data on perceptions underscore media’s influence. The Ipsos/UNHCR 2024 poll cited above found 73% global support for asylum-seekers – a surprisingly high figure that likely reflects recent humanitarian appeals in war-torn regions. UNHCR stresses that better communication strategies – informed by data on public attitudes – are needed to sustain support.

²¹ <https://www.hcn.org/issues/56-9/venezuelan-migrants-use-social-media-to-counter-xenophobia/>

²² <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10584609.2025.2472765?src=exp-la>

²³ OSCE stands for the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**, and ODIHR stands for its **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights**.

Together, OSCE/ODIHR produces **guidelines, handbooks, and policy recommendations** that promote human rights, democracy, and tolerance across OSCE’s 57 member states, which include European countries, the U.S., and others in the Northern Hemisphere.

To know more visit: <https://www.osce.org/odihr>



THE ROLE OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN COMBATING XENOPHOBIA AND PROMOTING CULTURAL TOLERANCE

Education is a powerful long-term antidote to prejudice. Schools and universities shape young minds, and can inculcate values of respect, diversity and human rights. UNESCO emphasizes that “education systems and educational institutions have an important role and responsibility in addressing and eliminating racism”²⁴. By extension, quality education can confront xenophobia: teaching history and social studies with diverse perspectives, fostering intercultural dialogue, and developing critical thinking all help students overcome stereotypes. Agenda 2030’s SDG 4 reflects this aim: Target 4.7 specifically calls on countries to ensure all learners acquire the knowledge and skills for “global citizenship” and an “appreciation of cultural diversity”. In practice, this includes school curricula on human rights, peace education, and multicultural understanding.

Inclusive schooling – where refugee and host-country children learn side by side – can reduce prejudice through personal contact. Decades of research in social psychology (the “contact hypothesis”) suggest that when children from different backgrounds work and play together under equal conditions, mutual trust grows. In classrooms where refugee children are welcomed, local students often see their shared interests. For example, language and arts projects that celebrate different cultures can show respect for refugees’ heritage. While quantitative global data is limited, many education programs document that intercultural education increases tolerance and civic-mindedness. UNESCO’s Global Citizenship Education (GCED) framework (endorsed by the UN General Assembly) is built around exactly this: empowering learners to be “proactive contributors to a more peaceful, tolerant and inclusive world”²⁵.

Yet the benefits of education depend on access. Tragically, most refugee children lack the schooling they need. A 2023 UNHCR report found that out of 14.8 million school-aged refugee children, “51 per cent – more than 7 million” were not enrolled in schools. Enrollment drops sharply with age: 65% of refugee children attend primary school, but only 41% attend secondary school, and just 6% are in tertiary education. In contrast, global averages are much higher for host populations. These gaps indicate lost opportunities. Uneducated youth is more vulnerable to radicalization or blame. The education report notes that host countries (especially low- and middle-income) bear much of the burden of educating refugees, but when inclusive policies are implemented, refugees gain skills that benefit both them and host societies²⁶.

Education policy and curriculum content matter as well. In many countries, textbooks and lessons remain biased. UNESCO’s research on textbooks around the world has found persistent stereotypes about migrants and minorities, sometimes portraying them only as “the needy poor” or security threats. By contrast, civic and history curricula that include refugee narratives (e.g. stories of past refugees who contributed to society) normalize diversity. Teacher training is also crucial: educators who understand refugee trauma and culture can create safe, welcoming classrooms. Unfortunately, xenophobic attitudes in society can

²⁴ <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/future-we-can-all-live-how-education-can-address-and-eradicate-racism>

²⁵ <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/page/global-citizenship-education>

²⁶

<https://www.unhcr.org/us/news/announcements/new-unhcr-report-reveals-over-7-million-refugee-children-out-school>



sometimes affect schools. There are documented cases where refugee students face bullying or discrimination by peers or staff, reflecting broader societal biases. Nonetheless, many international guidelines stress education as a preventive tool. For example, UNHCR's Guidance on Race and Xenophobia highlights that education and awareness programs are a part of UNHCR's

strategy to build tolerance. In addition, education has a self-reinforcing effect on development outcomes. The World Bank notes that as displacement becomes more protracted, "needs morph from emergency to long-term development," with "education for displaced children" as a central need ²⁷. Educated refugees are better equipped to contribute to labor markets and to understand civic life in the host country, which in turn can improve community relations. Conversely, lack of education can fuel resentment on both sides: uneducated refugees may feel isolated and local youths may see them as unjustly getting resources. Thus ensuring that refugee children attending schools is directly linked to social unity.

Historical context also matters. Education about historical episodes of displacement and xenophobia (e.g. stories of Jewish refugees during World War II, or migrant labor history) can help students see parallels today. UNESCO's campaigns on teaching tolerance often encourage studying past injustices (e.g. the role of propaganda in ethnic violence) so that "we may learn from the past to build a just and peaceful future." Likewise, teacher associations and civil society sometimes organize intercultural events on campus. These kinds of activities, though hard to quantify globally, are in line with SDG 4's broader target of "promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups."

In summary, the education system serves as a long-term anchor for tolerance. By integrating refugee students, fostering intercultural curricula and combating bias in schools, education directly counters the ignorance at the heart of xenophobia. UNHCR and UNESCO evidence consistently link higher education levels with more openness to refugees: for example, surveys often find younger, more educated respondents as more positive towards migrants. More concretely, the UNHCR–UNESCO Global Education Report (2023) urges that "we need fully inclusive education systems that give refugees the same access and rights as host-country learners," noting that inclusive schooling must be supported by national policies and adequate resources. Although expanding refugee education is challenging, the international goal is clear: schooling fosters the empathy and global citizenship that Agenda 2030 and UNHCR's mandates demand.

²⁷ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/forced-displacement>



CASE STUDIES

1. THE MYANMAR CRISIS

Background: Civil Conflict and Humanitarian Crisis in Myanmar

Myanmar has been mired in armed conflict and a deepening humanitarian crisis since the military coup of February 2021. Fighting between the Tatmadaw (military) and numerous ethnic and pro-democracy armed groups has spread nationwide, displacing record numbers of people. By late 2024, over **3.5 million** people (more than 6% of the population) were internally displaced (IDPs) by the conflict²⁸. Roughly one-third of these IDPs are children. Simultaneously, about **1.3 million** Myanmar refugees live outside the country (mostly Rohingya in Bangladesh, with smaller numbers in India, Malaysia and Thailand). Nearly **19.9 million** people (about one-third of all Myanmar residents) were estimated to need humanitarian assistance in 2025²⁹. Decades of military rule and localized ethnic violence have left basic services weak, leaving millions of poor and displaced people highly vulnerable to any major disaster.

Key facts (pre-quake)

Before the earthquake, Myanmar's *ongoing civil war* had forced over 3.5 million people to flee their homes, while a further 1.3 million lived as refugees abroad. Nearly 20 million people needed emergency aid by 2025. Access to shelter, healthcare, clean water and schooling was already very limited for many IDPs and refugees.

The March 28, 2025 Earthquake and Its Destruction

On 28 March 2025 at about 12:50 p.m. local time, a powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck central Myanmar. The epicenter was on the Sagaing Fault, just south of the city of Mandalay (Myanmar's second-largest city)³⁰. Twelve minutes later, a magnitude 6.7 aftershock jolted nearby areas³¹. This was one of Myanmar's strongest quakes in over a century^{32 33}. The quake was felt across a wide region, including Mandalay, Sagaing Region, Bago Region, Nay Pyi Taw, and parts of southern Shan State³⁴. Buildings collapsed in towns and villages, and major infrastructure was heavily damaged.

Magnitude and epicenter: The main shock of 7.7 originated at only ~10 km depth on the Sagaing Fault. The intense shaking offset the ground by up to **6–10 meters** along parts of the fault. Such displacement is visible in satellite data.

²⁸ <https://thedefensepost.com/2025/01/03/millions-displaced-conflict-myanmar/>

²⁹ <https://www.acaps.org/en/countries/myanmar>

³⁰ <https://www.unhcr.org/hk/en/emergencies/myanmar-earthquake>

³¹ <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/154156/satellite-data-show-motion-of-burma-earthquakes>

³²

<https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/china-pledges-137-million-myanmar-earthquake-relief-2025-04-11/>

³³

<https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/myanmar-earthquake-toll-crosses-3000-forecast-rains-pose-new-threat-rescuers-2025-04-03/>

³⁴

https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/2025-04/Earthquake_response_in_Myanmar_one_month_update_ENG_Final.pdf



Affected regions: The hardest-hit areas were in **central Myanmar**. Mandalay and Sagaing regions (pop. ~5.7 million) took the brunt of the shaking ³⁵. Damage extended south to Nay Pyi Taw and north towards the India and China borders. Even 1,000 km away, in Bangkok, Thailand, some high-rise buildings partially collapsed and homes were damaged.

Destruction: Preliminary estimates found **41,000+ houses collapsed** and over 120,000 damaged across the country ³⁶. More than **1,000 government buildings** were wrecked, along with temples, mosques and schools. In Mandalay city, high-rises and the control tower at the airport were ruined, cutting off air traffic ³⁷. **Bridges and roads** also failed, isolating many villages. The quake caused nationwide power and communications outages, compounding the chaos ³⁸.

Casualties: Official figures reported **at least 3,000–3,800 people killed** and over 5,000 injured ³⁹. (By early April, UN and media tallies converged around ~3,600 dead.) Many bodies remained buried in rubble for days because aftershocks and communications blackouts delayed rescues. Hospitals reported shortages of blood supply and medicine as nearly half of local health facilities were damaged. Extreme heat (daily highs over 40 °C) and unseasonal rains hampered rescue efforts and risked disease outbreaks ⁴⁰.

The earthquake left a **landscape of devastation**. Anecdotal reports describe “mosques shaken” and entire villages flattened. Infrastructure loss was immense: in Sagaing city and historic Mingun, **over 70% of buildings** were seriously damaged ⁴¹. Key transport links (roads, bridges, the airport) were severed, isolating thousands. Large zones of central Myanmar remain under emergency repair.

Challenges for Refugees and IDPs

The quake struck areas that **already host large displaced populations**. Central Myanmar (Sagaing/Mandalay) has become a refuge for people fleeing conflict in the north ^{42 43}. Many IDP camps and informal settlements were directly shaken. As one displaced family remarked, “Our lives were just getting better... now the earthquake has made me flee again... our troubles are doubled”. The disaster **doubled the hardships** for refugees and IDPs in several ways:

- **Shelter:** Before the quake, many IDPs lived in flimsy bamboo huts or crowded community buildings. The earthquake **destroyed or damaged thousands of these shelters**. After the shaking, large numbers of displaced families found themselves **homeless again**, sleeping outdoors or under trees. For example, one IDP family was

³⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/hk/en/emergencies/myanmar-earthquake>

³⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/us/news/press-releases/unhcr-airlifts-relief-supplies-earthquake-survivors-myanmar>

³⁷ <https://apnews.com/article/thailand-myanmar-earthquake-latest-rescue-4069e6865c131848968a118644350284>

³⁸

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/myanmar-internet-shutdowns-hinder-earthquake-aid-response-2025-04-09/>

³⁹ <https://worldrelief.org/blog-myanmar-earthquake/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/children-hit-hardest-earthquake-myanmar>

⁴¹

https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/2025/helping-all-around-the-world.html?srsltid=AfmBOOoX7Lo9AhET2F-aSaEcU7iyGyhm8GmEP-b_5q1XiH2HOMQeFiIj

⁴² <https://www.unhcr.org/hk/en/emergencies/myanmar-earthquake>

⁴³ <https://www.unhcr.org/us/news/stories/myanmar-quake-piles-fresh-suffering-families-fleeing-conflict>



forced to camp on a schoolyard, using only a tarpaulin tent provided by aid agencies. Emergency distributions have been crucial: UNHCR airdropped *tents and tarpaulins* for tens of thousands of people, and the Red Cross delivered blankets, mosquito nets and hygiene kits to over 4,000 households. Even so, shelter remains a critical shortfall.

- **Healthcare:** IDP and refugee communities generally have **poor access to medical care**, a problem worsened by the quake. Many local clinics and hospitals collapsed or were damaged – roughly **half of health facilities in the affected regions** were knocked out. Medical supplies ran low amid the flood of injuries. UNICEF and WHO warned of **rising disease risks**: lack of clean water and sanitation threatened cholera and dengue outbreaks. Red Cross volunteer medics were rushed in, and Medical Reserve Corps (MRCs) teams provided first aid and emergency referrals, but long-term healthcare remains precarious.
- **Education:** Displaced children were especially hard-hit. The earthquake *collapsed or damaged hundreds of schools*, depriving many children of classrooms. In Mandalay, schools had been shelters for IDP families – these were shaken too. Images show children taking shelter under makeshift tarps outside schools. UNICEF reported “children sleeping outside” with no clean water or medical supplies. This interruption to schooling and child protection adds trauma to families already uprooted by war.
- **Basic services (water, food, communication):** The quake further strained already-scarce services for displaced people. Clean water access fell due to damaged pipes and pumps; relief agencies distributed water purification kits but warned that existing water shortages could spark illness. Food insecurity worsened: community kitchens and aid partners worked around the clock to feed people, but “many have been left without homes to return to” or fields to farm. Notably, communication blackouts plagued IDP regions even before the quake. Rebels and local activists had repeatedly called for the internet to be restored, especially after the earthquake. Three days after the quake, some communities still had no phone or internet, making it almost impossible for displaced families to report needs or request help.

In sum, Myanmar’s refugees and IDPs went “back to square one” after the earthquake. They lost fragile shelters, had no easy access to clinics or schools, and faced new competition for food, water and medicine. As one elder IDP put it, “Right now everyone is suffering – but among those affected, we are the worst. As displaced people, we have nowhere to live and nothing to live on”.

Summary: The March 2025 earthquake struck in Myanmar that was already on the brink of crisis. Its large-scale devastation also contributed to the already existing humanitarian crisis of IDPs and refugees in Myanmar. Shattered houses and flattened infrastructure deprived displaced households of shelter or services. Relief organizations – Red Cross, UN, NGOs and some governments – launched a big response, delivering tents, food, water and medical supplies. Despite this, access restrictions and ongoing conflict have limited the amount of aid delivered to the most vulnerable. For displaced families already, the disaster has meant being displaced yet again, on top of the difficulty of being able to access shelter, health care, education and other necessities in the crisis-stricken country.



Map of Myanmar (country outline and states). The Sagaing and Mandalay regions (north-central, shaded) border India and house many displaced people. These central regions lay along the Sagaing Fault and bore the brunt of the March 2025 earthquake. Yangon is in the south.



Figure: Severely damaged portion of the Yangon–Mandalay Expressway after the 7.7 magnitude earthquake (March 2025). The quake sheared the highway's concrete supports, illustrating the extensive infrastructure damage.

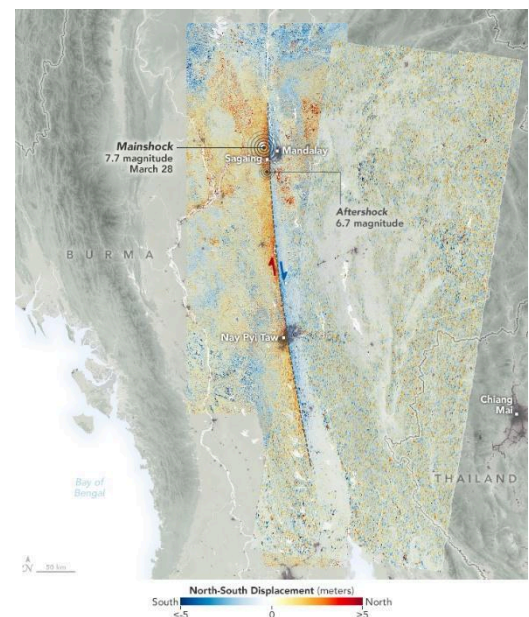
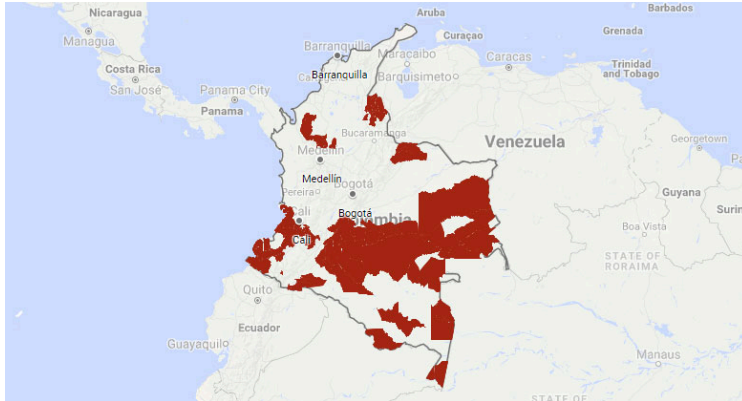


Figure: Satellite-inferred ground displacement (north–south) along the Sagaing Fault after the March 2025 quake. Red areas moved northward, blue southward. The epicenter (Mandalay) and a 6.7 aftershock to its south are marked. Displacements reached 6–10 m along the fault.

2. THE CONTINUING CRISIS OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN COLOMBIA

Background:

Colombia has faced armed conflict since the 1960s, involving government forces, leftist guerrillas (notably the FARC – Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), and right-wing paramilitary groups ⁴⁴. These decades of fighting have driven millions of Colombians from their homes. The map shows regions (in red) where former FARC guerrillas remained active as of 2020. Even after the 2016 peace agreement with the FARC, violence by remaining armed groups has continued. In fact, over 1.4 million people were



newly displaced since that 2016 accord ⁴⁵. By late 2022, about 6.8 million people were recorded as internally displaced (IDPs) in Colombia, and by mid-2024 that number approached 7 million. The government's Victims and Land Restitution Law (Ley 1448 of 2011) recognizes these displaced people and provides for reparations: it aims to return

stolen land and pay financial compensation to victims of conflict ⁴⁶. This law (initially set for 10 years) was extended to 2031 in recognition of ongoing needs. Colombia's current administration (President Gustavo Petro, elected 2022) has made "Total Peace" a top priority – pursuing rural development and peace talks (for example with the ELN guerrilla group) as part of implementing the 2016 accord.

Challenges: Ongoing violence and poverty create major challenges for displaced Colombians. Many rural areas remain under the control of non-state armed groups. Clashes in these regions continue to force people to flee. In 2023 alone, more than 278,000 Colombians were newly displaced by conflict and violence. Key challenges include:

- **Violence and Insecurity:** Armed groups (FARC dissidents, ELN, paramilitaries, and criminal gangs) compete for control of territory. They use tactics like extortion, threats and forced recruitment. Villagers in conflict zones may be "confined" for days or weeks, unable to leave safely, or flee under attack.
- **Loss of Land and Property:** Displaced families often lose farms, homes and possessions when they escape. A 2024 report found over half of IDP households in Colombia suffered property loss, and about 45% lost land due to displacement ⁴⁷.

⁴⁴

<https://www.sdg16.plus/policies/colombias-measures-for-armed-conflict-victim-reparations-and-land-restitution/>

⁴⁵ <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/colombia-situation>

⁴⁶ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/06/10/colombia-victims-law-historic-opportunity>

⁴⁷

https://www.acaps.org/fileadmin/Data_Product/Main_media/20241202_ACAPS_Colombia_Analysis_hub_Individual_displacement_01.pdf



Restituting this land has been difficult: many landowners resist returning land, and officials struggle with bureaucracy and security risks.

- **Poverty and Housing:** Most IDPs are very poor and live in precarious conditions. UNHCR reports that about 65% of displaced people live below the poverty line and only 15% have stable housing ⁴⁸. Many have settled in informal urban neighborhoods or makeshift camps without basic services. As a result, 88% of IDPs “have not overcome their vulnerability” and face problems like food insecurity, lack of clean water, and limited access to education and healthcare.
- **Social Strain:** The influx of IDPs strains host communities. Public services (schools, clinics, housing programs) can be overwhelmed. Women, children, indigenous and Afro-Colombian IDPs often face extra hardships and discrimination in finding work or aid.

Outcomes: Despite these efforts, most displaced Colombians remain in need, and the situation has not been fully resolved. UN reports find that **the majority of IDPs still struggle**: 65% live in poverty and 88% have not overcome their vulnerabilities. Only about 15% of IDPs have adequate housing. In other words, most IDPs are still poor, jobless or without proper homes.

Some progress is visible but it is very limited. Thousands of farming families have begun to reclaim land: as noted, roughly 20,800 acres were redistributed to victims by late 2024. These land transfers provide hope to some communities and a sense of justice after years of loss. However, this represents only a fraction of the land promised under the peace accord (which envisaged redistributing millions of acres). As Reuters reports, continued security problems and funding limits mean that the land reform remains incomplete.

Meanwhile, new violence still drives displacement. For example, fighting among non-state armed groups in 2024 caused fresh waves of flight in regions like Cauca and Nariño ⁴⁹. In short, although the major FARC insurgency formally ended, **organised violence has taken new forms** and continues to “trigger emergencies and displacement.”

In summary, Colombia’s internal displacement crisis is far from over. The 2016 peace agreement and humanitarian programs have eased some suffering, but **millions of people remain uprooted**. Many IDPs still live in dangerous conditions, and the cycle of violence has not fully stopped. This case study shows that while laws and aid exist, lasting solutions depend on broader peace, security and development reforms – goals that Colombia continues to pursue.

⁴⁸ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/116471>

⁴⁹

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/promised-land-colombia-makes-slow-progress-land-rights-since-farc-peace-deal-2024-11-12/>



CONCLUSION

As of 2023, the world is undergoing a displacement crisis without precedent that has over 117 million people displaced due to armed conflicts, natural disasters, climate changes, and political repression. Such issues have resulted in refugees getting denied some basic human rights like food, water, shelter, medical help, and education. Addressing such predicaments on a global scale is the responsibility of international and non-state organizations which provide immediate humanitarian relief and maintain the dignity of the affected communities.

International organizations are essential as they provide systematic emergency services together with resource protection in regions bound by state aid channels. Also, non-state actors are critical in alleviating acute food shortages, primarily caused by displacement. Even with access restrictions, non-state allies, such as Save the Children and World Vision, have stepped up to deliver life saving nourishment. Their response underlines the vital role non-state actors play for humanitarian assistance.

Nevertheless, concern for refugees does not stop at meeting their basic needs. It has been observed that xenophobia and the intolerance of the displaced exists acute forms of discrimination, exclusion and violence. Any sentiments of that nature are mostly the outcome of misinformation, manipulated politics, and media portraying refugees as danger. It is still alarming, however, and despite global surveys of empathy towards refugees, there remains a considerable amount of suspicious disbelief, which hampers integration.

Public perception is driven largely by the media. While inflammatory or slanted reporting may entertain harmful stereotypes, objective and compassionate pieces foster acceptance and unity. Not only that but even the members of refugee communities employ the changing digital environment for the telling of personal stories, combating the hostile and false narratives.

Xenophobia, in the long run, can be addressed owing to the educational frameworks in place. Tolerance and education are correlated, and one informs the other. Respect and understanding of different cultures works toward educational inclusivity. Refugee children, however, are still considered to be the most neglected within the realm of formal education and schooling. Other measures that work towards betterment of society include assimilation of refugee students into local educational institutions, modification of educational materials to embrace diversity, and instructional staff sensitivity training on inclusive education frameworks.

To conclude, cohesive and systematic solutions such as immediate aid to refugees, protection and advocacy of their rights, racism, and discrimination against the group, and notable policies for inclusive education help address the issue on a global stage. The integration of these approaches works toward preserving the humanity and civilized treatment of the displaced citizens while ensuring the objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are targeted.



EXPECTATIONS FROM THE DELEGATES

Being on this committee demonstrates your commitment to addressing some of the most important humanitarian challenges of our time. The agenda has a diverse set of particularly pertinent issues, including but not limited to: **hosting and support for host countries, protection of access afforded for healthcare and education, combating xenophobia, enhancing international cooperation and institutions for refugee protection, and exploring the roles of media, education, and civil society.**

While the bureau is confident in the abilities of the delegates, and trust you will engage in appropriate debate and negotiation, I have high expectations of all of you exercising diplomacy, cooperation, and constructive dialogue. Your intervention must be based on credible research regarding your specific policy and humanitarian values. Delegates are required to show appropriate behavior and courtesy, abide by the procedures, and foster respect and sensitivity to the issues affecting millions of people.

Non-negotiable requirements state that all original work must preserve integrity. The use of any artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and plagiarism in position papers, draft resolutions, or interventions is absolutely forbidden. All such actions are detrimental to the spirit of this committee, and will, if discovered, have serious consequences including disqualification from committee activities.

In addition, all the delegates should strive towards practical and inclusive solutions, remembering that our conversation has real-world consequences. This committee is not only a simulation—it is an opportunity to foster future leaders of the world imbued with a sense of purpose, responsibility, and compassion.



HOW TO RESEARCH

Country Specific

Research about your allotted country, their stance on the issue, their past actions, what they're currently doing about the issue.

Committee Specific

Research about UNHCR, its mandate and how it helps refugees worldwide.

Study Guide

Read the study guide thoroughly as it provides all the necessary background information that the committee will revolve around. Then research about all the subtopics, this helps delegates in thinking of substantive solutions regarding the agenda.

Past Actions

To get a better understanding of what your proposed solutions should be like, delegates can research about UNHCR's and their own countries' past actions and resolutions as well.

Allies and Opponents

Figure out your countries allies and opponents. Make sure your allies are those whose foreign policy aligns to your countries' foreign policy

Current Statistics

Research about the current scenarios relating to the agenda and back this research up with statistics, facts and figures.

The Solutions Delegates Propose Should be SMART:

S - Specific

M - Measurable

A - Achievable

R - Realistic

T - Time Bound



Reliable Websites for Research:

- 1) Reuters
- 2) International Committee of the Red Cross
- 3) Your Countries Government Website
- 4) The websites of The United States Government

Not Reliable Websites:

- 1) Wikipedia
- 2) Blogs
- 3) Magazines
- 4) Newspapers that are not recognised globally

Note:

The use of any form of AI (Artificial Intelligence) for speech writing and research is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Any form of plagiarism will also not be tolerated in the committee. If any delegate is found engaging in such actions, they will face severe consequences.



QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER

- 1) How to strengthen International support for host countries in order to reduce the burden of refugee influxes?
- 2) How can governments and international organizations effectively address human rights violations against refugees while also ensuring their access to healthcare and education?
- 3) How to strengthen the involvement of international organizations and non - state actors in providing aid to refugees?
- 4) How can preexisting refugee registration systems be made more effective in global humanitarian responses?
- 5) How can the goals enlisted in agenda 2030 be effectively implemented to address global challenges faced by refugees?
- 6) How can local Communities counter Xenophobia while actively promoting inclusion of refugees via social media and education in their home countries?



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