



©UNHCR/Sylvain Cherkaoui. A Burkinabe man walks across the arid land near Kaya, Burkina Faso. Global warming has degraded about 80% of the Sahel's farmland, resulting in increasing competition for natural resources.

CLIMATE ACTION

**The climate crisis is a human crisis.
It is driving displacement and increasing the
vulnerability of those already forced to flee.**

Why support UNHCR? With over 70 years of experience working in some of the most complex contexts, we are on the ground in 132 countries assisting people forced to flee, working alongside governments, humanitarian partners, and the forcibly displaced themselves. UNHCR prepares and supports forcibly displaced and host communities during climate disasters, preventing or mitigating further negative impact of climate emergencies, and increasing the resilience of forcibly displaced and host communities.

90% of refugees (70% of IDPs) originate from countries on the front lines of the climate emergency.

Refugees also face disproportionate exposure to climate-related risks in countries of refuge: While highly climate vulnerable countries are home to 20% of the world's population, they host over 40% of refugees.

Millions of forcibly displaced and stateless people are living in climate "hotspots" where they typically lack the resources to adapt to an increasingly inhospitable environment.

The dynamics of poverty, food insecurity, climate change, conflict and displacement are increasingly interconnected and mutually reinforcing, driving more and more people to search for safety and security.

The climate emergency is on every continent and in every region.

We are already seeing implications of the climate emergency in regions with high concentrations of forcibly displaced people such as the Sahel, Central America, The Horn of Africa, South Asia and the Middle East.

Most of the world's refugees originate from just five countries -- Afghanistan, Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria, and Venezuela. Yet, these countries are also among the most vulnerable to climate change.

How we make a difference UNHCR has an important contribution to make to global climate action, as we are already working with communities most vulnerable to climate change. Here are three aspects of our work:



Operations – leading on the frontlines of disasters and emergencies

With our unparalleled operational experience and presence around the world, and with our network of partners—including forcibly displaced people themselves—UNHCR is well-positioned to bring operational solutions to the impact of climate change on humanitarian contexts. This includes our work to **enhance the resilience** of displaced people and communities to climate-related and other environmental risks and to **preserve and rehabilitate** the natural environment and mitigate environmental degradation in displacement settings. This includes, for example, environmental sustainability in site planning and settlement, shelter, housing, sanitation and hygiene, livelihoods, food security, nutrition, public health, education and cash-based interventions.

Our work also includes **strengthening preparedness, anticipatory action and response** to support protection and solutions for people displaced and their hosts in disaster situations.



Greening UNHCR – reducing our own environmental footprint

As part of UNHCR's participation in the UN's '**Greening the Blue**' initiative, we are taking steps to reduce the environmental impact of our offices, vehicles and travel, and engaging staff in adopting eco-conscious behaviours. One example is the Green Box initiative, with 445 UNHCR offices tracking and reducing energy consumption via the use of energy metering systems.



Law and policy – promoting protection of those forcibly displaced by the effects of climate change

UNHCR plays a key role in **helping develop policies related to internally displaced persons**, including those affected by climate-related displacement. We help **set norms related to disaster displacement** and advocate for inclusion of forcibly displaced communities in response plans. UNHCR ensures that **climate action plans have a protection lens**, putting people first at the heart of climate action. One example is [developing protection standards](#) for relocations away from unsafe or uninhabitable areas as an anticipatory and adaptive measure of last resort.

Financial support: what we need to make a difference

By investing in UNHCR, you contribute to helping forcibly displaced people receive the care and support they need to live their lives with dignity and in safety. Flexible support—that is, funding which is either unearmarked or softly earmarked—is the best way to ensure UNHCR can provide life-saving aid to those living in conflict- and climate-affected emergency-affected areas.

The Office seeks \$417 million for climate action in 2022 to respond to adverse effects of climate change, to do so through more environmentally friendly responses which help the displaced and their hosts resist climate shocks, and to ensure that there is improved anticipation and preparation for future, climate-induced population movements. Examples of UNHCR's climate action underway include helping communities restore forests in Bangladesh, Cameroon, and Ethiopia; building shelters which are sustainable and better for the environment in Yemen; and replacing diesel by using solar energy to ensure people have access to clean water in Chad. In Cox's Bazaar, UNHCR is also mitigating the risk from landslides and floods during monsoon season.

UNHCR is also taking innovative steps to reduce its own emissions and is working with the private sector to supply clean and competitively priced energy to its offices. Thanks to Sweden's SIDA and Germany's BMZ and GIZ, \$8 million in seed support has been raised toward this 10-year, \$60 million effort to transition all UNHCR offices to renewable energy, but additional support is needed to achieve a 45% reduction in emissions by 2030.

What making a difference looks like

In 2017, the solar farm in Azraq refugee camp, in Jordan, was the first such plant ever built in a refugee setting thanks to the support of the IKEA Foundation's Brighter Lives for Refugees campaign. The plant allows UNHCR to provide electricity free of cost to Azraq's 38,000 residents, creating savings that can be invested in other assistance. Every year, the plant saves up to \$2.75 million in electricity consumption costs and reduces CO₂ emissions by 6,300 tons. A grid-connected electricity network with low and

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