

Global Displacement

Forecast 2022 – July Update



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Introduction

This report builds on the Foresight tool that was developed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) together with IBM with funding from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and finalised in 2021.

The tool can, with a high degree of accuracy, forecast the cumulative number of forcibly displaced people one to three years into the future. DRC uses the tool to support country operations and the wider humanitarian system with more accurate forecasts for strategic planning for better prevention, response and protection to displacement-affected populations. The model has been employed to forecast the cumulative number of people displaced from 26 countries that have ongoing and evolving displacement crises. These countries account for approximately 87% of all global displacement or an estimated total of 75 million people displaced in 2021. The average margin of error on the 2021 displacement forecasts were 14% – ranging from a 1% error for Somalia and Burundi to 45% for Libya. The average margin of error on all the 188 forecasts made so far using the model is 19%.

This report presents the forecasted forced displacement in 2022 and 2023. Forced displacement is defined as refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people (IDPs). The number of people displaced in 2021 builds on the data collected by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

The report is an update to the preliminary displacement forecasts in the [Global Displacement Forecast 2022](#) report launched in February 2022. The forecasts have been updated as of end-June to reflect the final, released data on the number of IDPs, asylum seekers and refugees in 2021, as well as updates to a number of the underlying variables in the model.

The report briefly introduces some of the major displacement events that have happened so far in 2022 before introducing the new forecasted displacement for 2022 and 2023.

The Foresight tool and the production of this report are currently funded by the European Union Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Displacement Updates

More than 100 million people are now displaced worldwide. In 2021, the number of displaced people reached almost 90 million globally, but the Ukraine crisis has displaced another 12 million. The response to the Ukraine crisis has reaffirmed the importance of the Refugee Convention as an instrument to support collective and comprehensive protection for people fleeing conflict. It has also shown that the principle of responsibility-sharing found both in the Convention and reiterated in the Global Compact on Refugees can be a reality where political will is present, as demonstrated by coordinated and timely actions taken by European and other countries offering swift access to territory and protection to Ukrainian refugees.

But Ukraine is not the only crisis. Major drought in the Horn of Africa, rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and increasing violence in many parts of the Sahel and Central African region are continuing, with devastating humanitarian consequences. And many of these situations are worsened by spill-over effects from the Ukraine crisis in terms of increasing food and energy prices and funding and attention being diverted to the Ukraine response.

In the **Horn of Africa**, a severe drought is causing a sharp deterioration in humanitarian conditions. In **Somalia**, more than 80% of the country faces severe or extreme drought conditions. Four consecutive rainy seasons have failed, a climatic event not seen for at least 40 years. The latest weather forecasts suggest that the October–December 2022 rainy season will bring below-average rainfall. According to the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 3.2 million individuals are affected by drought.¹ Cereal-crop production is expected to be 50–70% below the 10-year average. Pastoralists are already faced with water and pasture shortages, rapidly weakening livestock body conditions, and declining livestock reproduction prospects. Water and food prices remain high and continue to rise in many areas. Combined with the poor economic situation, households lack the resources to protect their herds and ensure the appropriate amount of food and water for both their livestock and families.² More than 800,000 have already been displaced because of the drought in Somalia.³ The vast majority of the displaced are women and children in search of food, water and support, while men and older boys sometimes stay behind to watch any remaining livestock. Displaced families are often faced with the threat of eviction, limited access to services, disease outbreaks and sexual and gender-based violence.

In the Sahel region, violence continues to increase, with mounting humanitarian crises in many of the countries. In particular, **Burkina Faso** has witnessed a sharp deterioration in humanitarian conditions as violence has spread. In January 2022 alone, more than 160,000 people were displaced because of violence in the country. By the end of April, the number of displaced people had risen by more than 300,000 since the start of the year. In mid-June, the deadliest attack in a year happened in Seytenga close to the border of Niger, where al-Qaeda and ISIL (ISIS) fighters are clashing with the military. Earlier in June, ISIS fighters allegedly killed 11 policemen, which prompted military operations against the group. In retaliation, ISIS

¹ IOM (17 January, 2022): *Drought Related Displacement Analysis (December 2021)*

² FEWS Net & FSNAU (31 October, 2021): *Somalia Food Security Outlook October 2021 to May 2022*

³ OCHA (25 June, 2022): *2022 Drought Impact Snapshot (As of June 2022)*

attacked the town and, according to eye witnesses, were going door-to-door to seek out and kill adult males.⁴ Many people from the village managed to flee, with approximately two out of three being under 18 – as in the rest of the country, where two out of three of the 1.9 million internally displaced are children.

Sudan is another country in which significant deterioration has been witnessed and many episodes of large-scale displacement recorded. In just four days, an estimated 125,000 people were displaced from their homes in Kereneik area in West Darfur. The displacement was the result of violent clashes between Arab nomads and the Massalit tribes; at least 179 people were killed and 36 villages were affected – five were completely looted and burned. Insecurity remains high in the area, which is severely limiting movement, so farmers are unable to access and cultivate their land. This is affecting families' income, food security and ability to meet basic needs.⁵ In North Darfur, another recent displacement situation occurred when clashes between the Gimir and Arab tribes in West Darfur's Kulbus locality spread to North Darfur. The violence affected more than 25 villages and led to the displacement of 50,000 people between 6 and 11 June.⁶ Many villages were burned and looted. Most of the displaced are women and children who, in the process, lost their belongings, livestock and food reserves.

In **Myanmar**, the number of people in need of assistance has risen exponentially in 2022 because of the economic impact and deterioration of the protection environment following the military seizure of power and subsequent unrest. In January 2022, heavy shelling, airstrikes and the use of landmines in fighting between the military and allied forces of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) led to the displacement of approximately 29,000 people in Kayin State. In the northwest of Myanmar, fighting between the military and People's Defence Forces had a significant impact on civilians, with entire villages fleeing into the forest to seek shelter and refuge. Almost 60,000 people were displaced in January 2022 alone because of the fighting in the northwest. In May, another 82,000 people were reported to have been displaced because of fighting in the region.⁷

Nigeria continues to experience significant violence and displacement. In the northwestern state of Sokoto, more than 150,000 people have been displaced so far in 2022 because of conflicts between farmers and herders clashing over control of natural resources. These conflicts play out in a general insecure environment with a proliferation of armed groups, criminal enterprises and banditry. The violence and insecurity in Sokoto state alone has led to more than 70,000 people being internally displaced and 80,000 displaced into neighbouring Niger.⁸

Meanwhile, the **Ukraine** crisis, which erupted at the end of February 2022, has become one of the largest displacement crises in the world today. In just the first week, almost 1 million people crossed the Ukrainian border into neighbouring countries. By mid-June, there had been more than 7.7 million border crossings. It is estimated that there were 4.8 million Ukrainian refugees in Europe as of mid-June 2022 and an additional 7.1 million remained displaced within Ukraine. In addition, many are unable to move in the face of the conflict, are trapped in active war zones and are unable to meet their basic needs – including food, water and medicines.⁹

⁴ UNHCR (17 June, 2022): *UNHCR calls for urgent support to assist almost 16,000 newly displaced in Burkina Faso who fled massacre*

⁵ OCHA (9 June, 2022): *Sudan Kereneik Conflict, West Darfur Situation Report No. 01 (As of 1 June 2022)*

⁶ OCHA (14 June, 2022): *Sudan: Conflict in Kulbus locality, West Darfur. Flash Update no. 01*

⁷ OCHA (15 February, 2022): *Myanmar Humanitarian Update No.15*

⁸ UNHCR (14 June, 2022): *UNHCR Factsheet for Sokoto – North-West Nigeria (January – March 2022)*

⁹ UNHCR (10 June, 2022): *Ukraine Situation Flash Update #16*

Updated Displacement Forecasts 2022–2023

Combining the forecasts for the 26 countries covered in the model, the cumulative number of people displaced is forecasted to increase by 4.6 million people in 2022. This number is projected to increase by another 4.1 million in 2023; hence, a total increase of 8.7 million people displaced between 2021 and 2023. This does not include displacement from Ukraine.¹⁰ The forecast is almost 2 million higher than that in preliminary forecasts issued in February 2022. Combining the forecasts with the current displacement from Ukraine suggests that displacement could increase by approximately 20 million over the coming two years.

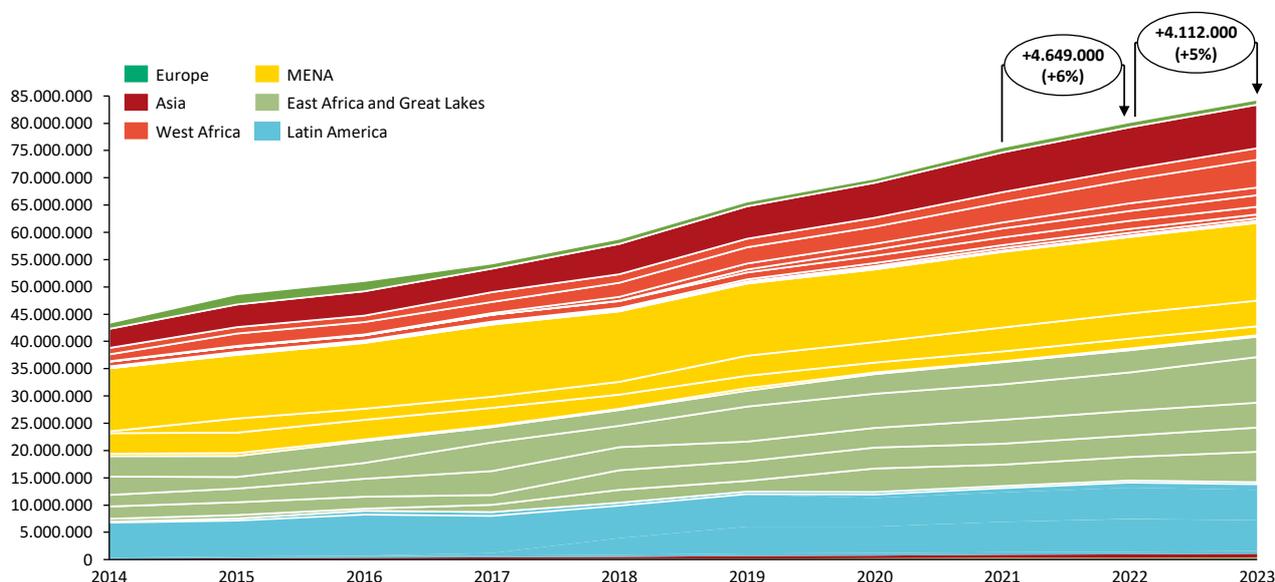


Figure 1: Forecasted development in forced displacement from 2021 to 2023

The increased displacement in 2022 is driven in particular by significant growth forecasted in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Venezuela, where combined displacement is forecasted to increase by more than 2.5 million. Other countries, such as Cameroon, Colombia, South Sudan and Yemen, are also projected to experience significant displacement increases in 2022. In 2023, while projections are more uncertain, significant increases are also forecasted in countries such as DR Congo, Ethiopia and Nigeria.

The major changes compared to the preliminary forecasts issued in February 2022 are in particular in Ethiopia and Nigeria, where forecasted displacement from 2021 to 2023 has increased by more than 500,000 people. The forecast for Myanmar has also been adjusted, with forecasted displacement now almost 200,000 higher. The forecasts for both Iraq and Sudan, where a significant displacement reduction

¹⁰ The forecasts are based on data to end-2021. As such, only limited changes were witnessed in the underlying data for Ukraine, which means that the forecasted displacement for Ukraine only suggests a very modest increase of 37,000 people displaced between 2021 and 2023

was forecasted in February 2022, have been adjusted to reflect the actual limited reduction in displacement in the period.

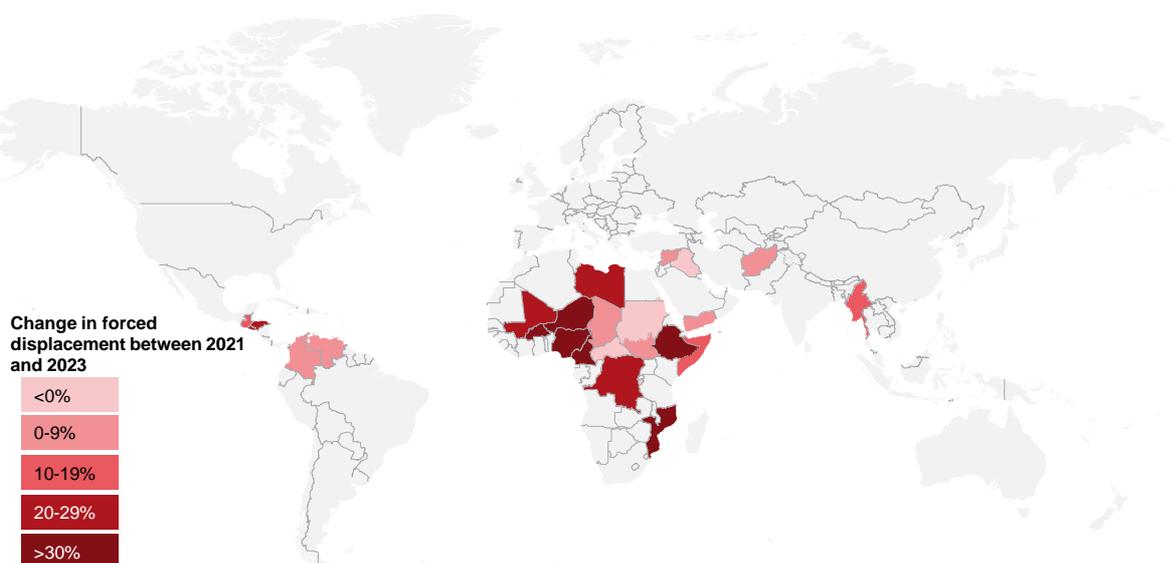


Figure 2: Relative change in displacement between 2021 and 2023

There are also countries that are expected to see significant relative increases in displacement. From end-2021 to end-2023, Niger is projected to see a 42% increase in the number of displaced people, similar to projections for Ethiopia and Mozambique. In countries such as Mali, Cameroon and El Salvador, displacement is forecasted to increase by 25–30% in the same period.

Looking at the forecasts from a regional perspective, West Africa¹¹ and East Africa¹² have the highest forecasted growth in the number of displaced people. In West Africa, the number of displaced people is forecasted to grow by 15% in 2022, while in 2023, the number of displaced people in East Africa is forecasted to grow by 15%. As such, by the end of 2023, East Africa is forecasted to have seen growth in displacement of 23% and West Africa 28% since end-2021.¹³ Other regions are expected to see fairly stable increases of around 3% annually, with the exception of Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where a decrease is projected. This corresponds with the preliminary forecasts issued in February 2022.

The preliminary forecasts in February 2022 found that of the 6.8 million expected increase in the number of displaced people, more than 5 million of them would be living in sub-Saharan Africa. With the updated forecast now estimating an increase of 8.7 million, the number of displaced people living in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to increase by 6.6 million. Another 800,000 increase will occur in Asia, while almost 700,000 will be in the MENA region. Europe and North America are estimated to see an increase of less than 300,000 – not including the Ukraine displacement. As such, of every 100 people forecasted to flee, 76 of them would be living in sub-Saharan Africa after fleeing, while only four would be living in Europe or North America.

¹¹ West Africa includes Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Mali

¹² East Africa includes Burundi, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia and South Sudan

¹³ Latin America includes Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Venezuela; MENA region includes Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria and Yemen; Asia includes Afghanistan and Myanmar; Europe includes Ukraine



Figure 3: Illustration of geographical distribution of 100 people fleeing

This difference is because displacement tends to happen in low- and lower-middle-income countries and forecasts are on average higher in countries with a higher share of internally displaced. In the 14 countries where more than 75% of displaced people were internally displaced at the end of 2021, the average forecasted growth in displacement in 2022 is 13%. In countries where less than 75% of displaced people were internally displaced, the average forecasted growth is only 6%.

As most of the displaced are internally displaced and those that flee typically move to neighbouring countries, the overwhelming responsibility to host the displaced falls on low-income countries. About 50% of the displaced persons in 2021 were living in low-income countries. This has decreased to 42% because of the Ukraine crisis, with the share of hosting increasing by approximately five-percentage points in lower-middle-income countries (Ukraine) and high-income countries (most of the countries neighbouring Ukraine). The forecasted displacement suggests that the hosting will decrease in the coming years in high-income and upper-middle-income countries, while it will increase in low-income and lower-middle-income countries.

Many of these hosting countries can have their own development challenges, as well as conflicts and security constraints. This means that opportunities to provide support to the displaced people are challenging. Of the 26 countries covered in the model, 19 are categorised as having either very high or extreme humanitarian access constraints.¹⁴ The importance of the issue is underscored by the fact that the forecasted displacement is on average higher in countries with poor humanitarian access. Countries with extreme access constraints, such as Afghanistan, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria and Syria are forecasted to see an average increase of 760,000 people displaced between 2021 and 2023. In countries categorised as facing high access constraints, such as Burkina Faso, Chad and Libya, the average increase is forecasted at 183,000 people displaced. Lastly, in countries categorised as having only moderate access constraints, such as El Salvador, Burundi and Guatemala, average displacement is forecasted to increase by only 51,000.

¹⁴ ACAPS (December, 2021): Humanitarian Access Overview

Conclusions & Recommendations

The updated forecasts align well with the preliminary forecast report, i.e., displacement will primarily occur and be hosted in low-income countries with poor humanitarian access. The forecasts underscore that displacement will continue to grow as long as concerted efforts to address the root causes of displacement, and funding to respond to the needs that arise as consequence, remain below what is required. The reaction to the Ukraine crisis has shown that a humane response from Europe to a refugee crisis is possible when there is political will. There are important lessons learned from the response that should guide future humanitarian response and the application of the commitments of the Refugee Convention and the Global Compact on Refugees.

The forecasts highlight the pressing need for global solutions, responsibility-sharing and solidarity. DRC calls on donors and host governments to:

1. Shift the narrative and paradigm on displacement from one of threat and securitisation to one of human rights and protection of vulnerable people at risk. This entails recognising all displaced people, regardless of their origin, nationality or means of arrival, as human beings with inalienable rights to life and dignity, and acknowledging that it is a collective global responsibility to ensure they can enjoy these rights.
2. Promote durable solutions to displacement and uphold the principles enshrined in the Global Compact on Refugees. In particular, the findings in this report highlight the urgent need for the international community to prioritise more equitable and predictable responsibility-sharing towards international protection of refugees. This should include recognising that existing resettlement targets are insufficient and governments should commit to increase and expand third-country solutions including resettlement.
3. Increase long-term predictable funding levels to match the needs of people affected by crisis and displacement to avoid further suffering and increase in needs, and prevent further displacement. Increased funding is needed to ease the pressures on host countries and support displaced people's self-reliance. As such, development actors, including the multilateral development banks must play a larger role in financing responses to protracted forced displacement and support host countries at the outset of refugee situations to incentivise refugee-friendly policies.
4. Scale-up political and diplomatic efforts in addressing the root causes of displacement and humanitarian needs. This includes recognising that displacement happens in a complex interplay of a variety of factors. Therefore, such efforts need to focus on ending violence and on addressing human rights abuses, state legitimacy and capacity, and economic inequality.
5. Hold parties in conflicts accountable for international humanitarian law, including facilitating unimpeded humanitarian access to displacement-affected communities to ensure that all critical, life-saving support is possible. This includes ensuring the safety of displacement-affected communities when receiving assistance, and the safety of humanitarian workers delivering assistance. Civilians and aid workers are not targets.

Annex – Table of Forecasts

Country	Number of displaced people 2021	Preliminary forecast (February 2022) for 2022	Final forecast 2022	Final forecast 2023
Afghanistan	7,301,097	7,397,364	7,657,000	7,962,000
Burkina Faso	1,618,849	2,024,714	1,871,000	2,128,000
Burundi	399,034	396,249	412,000	396,000
Cameroon	1,080,786	1,450,406	1,353,000	1,412,000
CAR	1,446,016	1,445,111	1,471,000	1,413,000
Chad	426,025	590,840	487,000	467,000
Colombia	5,435,894	5,229,808	5,748,000	5,565,000
DR Congo	6,479,683	7,270,224	7,044,000	8,322,000
El Salvador	329,736	302,781	366,000	420,000
Ethiopia	3,938,102	4,595,069	4,290,000	5,549,000
Guatemala	478,058	446,928	522,000	544,000
Honduras	513,044	587,171	552,000	634,000
Iraq	1,814,486	1,634,367	1,820,000	1,636,000
Libya	203,904	187,422	274,000	265,000
Mali	557,815	685,973	651,000	702,000
Mozambique	753,768	790,879	904,000	1,057,000
Myanmar	1,892,121	1,889,980	2,009,000	2,091,000
Niger	248,603	303,726	299,000	354,000
Nigeria	3,695,163	3,693,521	4,305,000	5,124,000
Somalia	3,803,816	4,051,199	3,929,000	4,417,000
South Sudan	4,385,106	4,543,164	4,572,000	4,607,000
Sudan	4,075,637	4,050,789	4,076,000	3,740,000
Syria	13,857,216	13,766,423	14,042,000	14,244,000
Ukraine	900,993	778,115	944,000	938,000
Venezuela	5,576,742	5,224,766	5,993,000	5,605,000
Yemen	4,361,853	3,900,146	4,633,000	4,744,000



Founded in 1956, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is Denmark's largest international NGO, with a specific expertise in forced displacement. DRC is present in close to 40 countries and employs 9,000 staff globally.

DRC advocates for the rights of and solutions for displacement-affected communities, and provides assistance during all stages of displacement: in acute crisis, in exile, when settling and integrating in a new place, or upon return. DRC supports displaced persons in becoming self-reliant and included into hosting societies. DRC works with civil society and responsible authorities to promote protection of rights and inclusion.

Our 7,500 volunteers in Denmark make an invaluable difference in integration activities throughout the country.

DRC's code of conduct sits at the core of its organisational mission, and DRC aims to achieve the highest ethical and professional standards. DRC has been certified as meeting the highest quality standards according to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

HRH Crown Princess Mary is DRC's patron.

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