



WHAT IS A CLIMATE REFUGEE?

There is no internationally recognized definition of climate refugees, however, **climate refugees are generally understood to be migrants who have been forced to leave their homes due to the sudden or gradual impacts of climate change.**

HOW DOES CLIMATE IMPACT DISPLACEMENT OTHERWISE?

Not only can climate change be a direct contributor to the displacement, but **in many of today's conflicts causing forced displacement climate change is a "threat multiplier."** A key example is Syria, where a 5-year drought preceded the civil war. Some experts assert that the devastation and scarcity of resources caused by the drought exacerbated socio-political tensions that led to the war. According to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, **"Climate change [is] now found to be the key factor accelerating all other drivers of forced displacement."**



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Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) envisions a world where refugees and other forcibly displaced people attain protection, opportunity, and participation. JRS seeks to accompany, serve, and advocate the cause of forcibly displaced people, that they may heal, learn, and determine their own future.

Front image: two women in South Sudan walk miles to get usable water for their homes.

*This pamphlet was printed on recycled paper



CLIMATE AND DISPLACEMENT

"The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are becoming increasingly serious and alarming."

POPE FRANCIS



Dear JRS Friends,

During the Lenten season, journey with Jesus to Jerusalem, where he will give his life for humanity in all its needs. One of those needs, and arguably the greatest, is the climate change that our planet earth is alarmingly suffering. For many of the families we serve, the days of drought seem endless. For others, the rain comes in waves. **Millions are experiencing forced migration or displacement due to cyclones, flooding, and other deadly weather events that have become more intense and more frequent due to climate change.**

JRS teams working with refugees near the Nile, for instance, have recounted nightmarish tales of narrow escape from flood levels that haven't been seen for more than a century. **They've lost essential food and material supplies when floodwaters swept through a JRS compound in South Sudan, yet they still managed to evacuate nearly 160,000 people from nearby refugee camps.**

Pope Francis has reminded us that climate is a common good "belonging to all and meant for all." During our recent Season of Creation, he urged us to adopt simpler lifestyles that are less harmful to the environment, with a warning that the "cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are becoming increasingly serious and alarming."

Please join JRS this Lent as we heed the call of Pope Francis as well as the cry of the poor. Your gift will help JRS teams across the globe as they support programs for refugees – and promote advocacy initiatives directing greater resources to migrants and refugees suffering from climate change.

As members of the human family, it is vital that we take greater care of our brothers and sisters – as well as our common home.



God bless.

Rev. Leo J. O'Donovan, S.J.
Director of Mission

CLIMATE DISPLACEMENT AFFECTS EVERYONE

21.5 MILLION

people annually have been forcibly displaced by weather-related events since 2008

By 2050, up to

250 MILLION

people will be displaced by climate change impacts



Extreme weather events such as floods, storms, heatwaves, and drought are displacing

41 PEOPLE EVERY MINUTE 

WHAT DOES CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING TELL US ABOUT CLIMATE REFUGEES?

Both climate change and the welcoming of migrants are issues that the Holy Father has pointed to as central in our time. In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis draws the link between them, noting that climate is causing people, especially the poor, to leave their homes. He writes that, "There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation," calling all of us to take responsibility for our brothers and sisters who have experienced this loss.



You can help the millions of refugees affected by the climate crisis.

Make your gift to JRS/USA today!

