



## Fact sheet 3

# Global refugee statistics

In 2011, an estimated **4.3 million people were newly displaced** due to conflict or persecution. More than 800,000 people were displaced as refugees across international borders, the highest number in more than a decade. Another 3.5 million people were newly displaced within the borders of their countries, a 20 per cent increase from 2010.

Of the world's displaced, **25.9 million people – 10.4 million refugees and 15.5 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs) – were receiving protection or assistance from UNHCR** at the end of 2011. This was 700,000 people more than in 2010.

**Statelessness was estimated to have affected up to 12 million people** by the end of 2011. However, efforts to assess the magnitude of the problem were hindered by the fact that the data captured by governments and communicated to UNHCR were limited to 3.5 million stateless individuals in 64 countries.

**Almost three quarters of the refugee population under the UNHCR mandate was in a protracted situation** at the end of 2011, amounting to 7.1 million people. UNHCR defines a protracted refugee situation as one in which 25,000 or more refugees of the same nationality have been in exile for five years or longer in any given asylum country.

**Developing countries hosted four-fifths of the world's refugees.** The 48 Least Developed Countries provided asylum to 2.3 million refugees.

With close to 2.7 million refugees in 79 countries, **Afghanistan remained the leading country of origin of refugees** in 2011. On average, one out of four refugees in the world originated from Afghanistan, with 95 per cent of them located in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

During 2011 **UNHCR submitted some 92,000 refugees to States for resettlement**, and close to 62,000 departed with UNHCR's assistance. According to governmental statistics, 22 countries admitted 79,800 refugees for resettlement during 2011 (with or without UNHCR assistance). The United States of America received the highest number (51,500).

**More than 876,100 people submitted individual applications for asylum or refugee status** in 2011. UNHCR offices registered 11 per cent of these claims. With close to 107,000 asylum claims – one tenth of applications globally – South Africa was the world's largest recipient of individual applications, followed by the United States of America (76,000) and France (52,100).

Some **17,700 asylum applications were lodged by unaccompanied or separated children** in 69 countries in 2011, mostly by Afghan and Somali children. The number was significantly higher than in 2010 (15,600 claims).

On average, **women and girls constituted 49 per cent of persons of concern to UNHCR.** They accounted for 48 per cent of refugees, and half of all IDPs and returnees (former refugees). Forty-six per cent of refugees and 34 per cent of asylum seekers were children below 18 years of age.

#### **Major refugee-hosting countries in 2011**

Pakistan 1,702,700  
Islamic Rep. of Iran 886,500  
Syrian Arab Rep. 755,400  
Germany 571,700  
Kenya 566,500  
Jordan 451,000  
Chad 366,500  
China 301,000  
Ethiopia 288,800  
United States 264,800

#### **Major source countries of refugees in 2011**

Afghanistan 2,664,400  
Iraq 1,428,300  
Somalia 1,077,000  
Sudan 500,000  
Dem. Rep. of the Congo 491,500  
Myanmar 414,600  
Colombia 395,900  
Viet Nam 337,800  
Eritrea 252,000  
China 205,400

Source: UNHCR Global Trends 2011, UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/4fd6f87f9.html>