Refugees as assets to their new countries

Why in news?

The World Refugee Day is celebrated on June 20 every year to honour the courage and resilience of the individuals displaced due to conflicts and unrest worldwide.

What is the significance of the World Refugee Day?

- Around 103 million individuals who have endured forced displacement due to conflicts and unrest worldwide.
- These staggering figures mask countless human stories marked by loss and shattered dreams.
- The world refugee day is a reminder of our collective responsibility as global citizens and a call for engagement and empathy.
- It is a day to promote solidarity between communities, and, most importantly, to reflect on the importance of welcoming refugees and displaced persons into our communities.
- **Global conflicts –** It includes the ongoing wars in Ukraine, Myanmar and Sudan among others, and the protracted situations in Afghanistan, and Somalia present an unprecedented challenge.
- These crises extend to our region where many individuals have been uprooted from their homes.

What is the position of South and Southeast Asia with respect to refugees?

- Sadly, South and Southeast Asia are not immune to the challenges of displacement.
- **India –** It is home to some 250,000 forcibly displaced persons, with women and children constituting half of that population.
- India continues to graciously host and assist refugees and asylum-seekers within its territory, a testament to our shared humanity.

What is the need of the refugees?

- The refugees need opportunities and not handouts.
- For refugee youths, it is not just a matter of talent; it is a matter of prospects.
- They wish to be self-reliant and are eager to use their talents and passions to contribute to the communities hosting them.

How can the barriers be dismantled?

- **Obstacles –** Refugees and asylum seekers encounter a myriad of obstacles, such as legal recognition and challenges in obtaining government-issued documents.
- These obstacles hinder their access to essential services, including financial support

and health care.

- **SDG –** To ensure that truly no one is left behind, it is necessary to engage with and include youth, especially refugee youth, in the realisation of the Sustainable Development Agenda.
- **Global Compact on Refugees –** It acknowledges the magnitude of the displacement crisis and calls for solidarity through a whole of society approach.
- It strives to enhance the international response, support host countries, promote self-reliance, and explore long-term solutions such as resettlement and safe returns.
- **Individual contribution –** It is built on the understanding that the responsibility towards the forcibly displaced is not limited to governments but extends to each, individuals.
- The individuals include the private sector, non-government organisations and community-based organisations.
- **Global South –** It also recognises that the Global South is disproportionately affected and that host communities need assistance.

What is the way forward?

- Addressing the rising number of the forcibly displaced is an urgent moral imperative that demands our collective action.
- It is incumbent upon us to dismantle these barriers and ensure that they are afforded equal opportunities in employment, education, housing, and health care.
- Our efforts in creating an inclusive society must cater to the unique needs of refugee youth.
- The principle of equitable burden-sharing should be accepted and the responsibilities should be fulfilled.
- Together, we can truly ensure the Government of India's vision of 'Viksit Yuva Viksit Bharat' is realised.

References

1. The Hindu | Refugees as assets to their new countries
2. IMF | Refugees as Assets to their new countries

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