



HUMAN MOBILITY

IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE UNFCCC- PARIS COP-21

Recommendations from the Advisory Group on Climate
Change and Human Mobility (November 2015)

WHAT IS THE ADVISORY GROUP ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN MOBILITY?

The Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility (Advisory Group) is composed of the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Norwegian Refugee Council and its Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (NRC/IDMC), Refugees International (RI), the Center for International Relations Studies de Sciences Po (Sciences Po-CERI), and the Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED).

The work of the Advisory Group is anchored in decisions of UNFCCC Parties to enhance understanding and action in the area of climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation (Paragraph 14(f) of the Cancun Decision 1/CP.16 and Doha decision 3/CP.18 paragraph 7 (a) (vi)). "Human mobility" is an umbrella term that encompasses displacement of populations, migration and planned relocation.

The goal of the Advisory Group is to provide technical support to UNFCCC Parties on human mobility in the context of climate change, and to ensure that aspects of human mobility – including migration, displacement and planned relocation and other forms of mobility – that are addressed under the UNFCCC are coherent and based on the most recent evidence, findings and experience (research, best practices, data, etc.)

This document answers questions about migration, displacement, and planned relocation in the context of climate change, and suggests recommendations for COP21 in Paris.



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR THE PARIS AGREEMENT TO ADDRESS HUMAN MOBILITY?

The Paris Agreement and decisions represent a unique opportunity for Parties to the UNFCCC to prevent and reduce climate change-related displacement by encouraging and supporting the planning and implementation of mitigation and adaptation strategies. This includes measures that: strengthen the resilience of climate vulnerable populations to enable them to remain where they live; support or facilitate voluntary and dignified internal and cross-border migration as an adaptation strategy; and, as an option of last resort, plan for participatory and dignified relocation.

WHERE AND HOW SHOULD HUMAN MOBILITY BE ADDRESSED IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT?

PREAMBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that climate change is a threat to livelihoods and human safety. • Recognize the need to prevent and reduce climate change-related displacement. • Recognize the needs of particularly vulnerable groups, such as migrants, refugees and people displaced internally or across international borders.
Article 2 GENERAL/ OBJECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the need to take into account human mobility in policies that manage the full range of societal impacts of climate change (mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage policies). • Recognize that safeguards should be adopted to prevent and reduce the displacement of populations and its negative impacts in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation projects and policies.
Article 4 ADAPTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the need to take into account human safety and the resilience of livelihoods in adaptation strategies to reduce the risk of displacement. Measures to prevent and reduce the displacement of climate vulnerable populations are a matter of adaptation. • States are strongly encouraged to take measures, including in their National Adaptation Plans, and in close consultation with communities at risk of displacement, to prevent and reduce internal and cross-border displacement in the context of climate change by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increasing the resilience of vulnerable populations to enable them to remain where they live if they choose to do so, – Strengthening resilience and enabling sustainable solutions for communities that have to move or are already displaced, as well as the communities that host them, – Planning for and facilitating voluntary migration as an adaptation strategy, and – As an adaptation measure of last resort, participatory planning with communities concerned for informed and dignified relocation. • Recognize that human mobility measures within national and regional climate change adaptation plans, policies and strategies may require adaptation funding, including from the operating entities of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC supporting both adaptation and loss and damage as well as and other funding mechanisms.
Article 5 LOSS AND DAMAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies related to managing loss and damage should address climate change-related displacement which cannot be avoided. • The UNFCCC can play a catalytic role in supporting relevant organizations and competent frameworks for providing assistance and protection to people displaced in the context of disasters and climate change. • If a displacement facility/mechanism is set up, it could serve as a forum for sharing experience and enhancing capacities to plan and implement climate adaptation measures that avoid displacement, facilitate voluntary migration, and encourage participatory and dignified planned relocation.



WHAT MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS COULD BE TAKEN TO ADDRESS HUMAN MOBILITY CONSIDERATIONS ONCE INTEGRATED IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT?

Substantial hooks in the Paris agreement could be implemented through the following key actions:

- ➔ Developing guidance and providing technical and capacity building support to national and local authorities, and (sub-)regional organizations, to include human mobility considerations within climate change adaptation strategies and policies, including through collaboration, as appropriate, with UNFCCC bodies and processes.
- ➔ With reference to Paragraph 14(F) of the Cancun Decision 1/CP.16 and to Doha decision 3/CP.18 paragraph 7 (a) (vi) continuing to consider the issues of displacement, migration and planned relocation within on-going activities of the Conferences of Parties to the UNFCCC including inter alia NAPs, the Adaptation Committee, the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism, and the Nairobi Work Programme.
- ➔ Ensuring that access to funding is secured and facilitated to finance human mobility-related measures within local, national and regional climate change adaptation, resilience building, and disaster risk management plans and activities, including from the operating entities of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC.

WHY ARE FACILITATED MIGRATION AND PLANNED RELOCATION IMPORTANT ADAPTATION MEASURES?

Well-managed migration, whether circular, temporary or undertaken with the intention to settle elsewhere, has the potential to increase the resilience of climate vulnerable populations by creating new livelihood opportunities and strengthening resilience to future risks. Migration also supports economic development in the areas migrants move to. At the same time, migration may increase vulnerability especially for women and children, with specific risks of economic exploitation, discrimination or abuse and hazardous conditions in the workplace or at home. It is therefore essential to ensure that migration occurs in a manner that fully respects the dignity and human rights of those who move and those who stay behind.

In some cases, the impacts of climate change may make life unsustainable and particular areas more permanently uninhabitable owing high exposure to extreme or frequent hazards or severely limited livelihoods options. Planned relocation, if implemented in consultation with and with respect for the rights of the people and communities involved, can protect vulnerable populations from climate risks and impacts through settling them in safer, more secure locations. Planned relocation is already occurring in some parts of the world. Sometimes affected populations are pressing authorities to assist them to relocate. Where planned relocation related to climate change cannot be avoided, its scale should be minimized and the process should always involve affected communities, fully protect their rights, and support them to fully restore their standard of living.

WHAT ARE THE OTHER RELEVANT GLOBAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND PROCESSES OF RELEVANCE FOR DISASTER-RELATED HUMAN MOBILITY?

The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 acknowledges the large number of disaster displaced persons identified in recent years as one of the devastating effects of disasters. The Framework underlines, inter alia, the need to prepare for “ensuring rapid and effective response to disasters and related displacement, including access to safe shelter, essential food and non food relief supplies” and encourages States to adopt, at national and local levels “policies and programmes addressing disaster induced human mobility to strengthen the resilience of affected people and that of host communities as per national laws and circumstances.” It also calls for “transboundary cooperation [...] to build resilience and reduce disaster risk, including [...] displacement risk

The Agenda for Sustainable Development also adopted in 2015 contains a commitment “to cooperate internationally to ensure [...] the humane treatment”, inter alia, of “displaced persons,” and to build the resilience of those in vulnerable situations to climate-related extreme events and other disasters.

The first **World Humanitarian Summit (WHS)** will be held in Istanbul on 23 and 24 May 2016 and will bring together governments, humanitarian organizations, people affected by humanitarian crises and other relevant stakeholders to develop a set of concrete actions aimed at enabling countries and communities to better prepare for crisis and emergencies, including preparing for increased frequency and intensity of climate change related natural hazards. It will be important to ensure the inclusion of human mobility challenges into such proposals and promote actions that can protect people from being displaced and ensure movement in dignity and safety when displacement is unavoidable.

The **UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)** will take place in Quito, Ecuador, on 17–20 October 2016. The goal of the conference is to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable urban development, assess accomplishments to date, address poverty, and identify and address new and emerging challenges. The first implementing conference of the Post-2015 sustainable development and climate change agendas, Habitat III offers a unique opportunity to discuss the important challenge of urban areas vulnerability to climate change (especially informal settlements) and as destinations for those uprooted by climate change effects.

Efforts to include human mobility in the UNFCCC framework are complementary to efforts to better factor climatic, natural hazards and environmental factors in human mobility initiatives and programmes.



HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BE DISPLACED IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE?

Future climate change projections indicate that previously unprecedented extreme weather events may become the norm rather than the exception and it is widely agreed that such events – in combination with other drivers of population exposure and vulnerability – will amplify the risk and challenges of displacement over the 21st century (IPCC 2014).

Evidence from past and recent events shows that weather-related disasters have resulted in significant levels of population displacement worldwide. Considering the impact of sudden-onset, weather-related hazards alone, a global average of at least 22.5 million people have been displaced each year from 2008 to 2014, and disaster displacement since the 1970s is on the rise (IDMC 2015). Since 2008, close to 175 million people who live in developing countries have been displaced by disasters, accounting for 95 per cent of the global total (IDMC 2015).