



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is thankful for the opportunity given to support the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons and to provide input to the report on *Internal displacement in the context of the slow-onset adverse effects of climate change*. In the following input, we selected the questions to which NRC could substantially contribute.

A. Examples of national and/or regional laws and policies relevant to internal displacement in the context of disasters and climate change.

The inclusion of disaster displacement in disaster risk reduction strategies is fundamental to better protect people displaced in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change; and to support States in fulfilling their primary responsibility to address disaster displacement risk and impacts.

In accordance with Target (E) of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the [Words into Action Guidelines– Disaster displacement: How to reduce risk, address impacts and strengthen resilience](#) (Words into Action on Disaster Displacement, published by UNDRR) offers practical guidance to help Government authorities integrate disaster displacement and other related forms of human mobility into disaster risk reduction strategies. The following examples of national and regional laws and policies are taken from the Words into Action:

- **The European Commission’s Risk Assessment and Mapping Guidelines for Disaster Management** includes “permanent displacement” as a human impact. EU member States are invited to use the guidelines as the basis for their national disaster risk analyses.
- **Kenya’s Prevention, Assistance and Protection to Internally Displaced Persons and Affected Communities Act 2012**, which applies both to disasters and conflict, establishes a monitoring and reporting system in areas where people are at risk of displacement (see Art. 5(4)).
- **Mali’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper** includes measures to address the needs of people displaced by disasters, including through relocation.¹
- **Bangladesh** adopted its **National Strategy on the Management of Disaster and Climate Induced Internal Displacement** in 2015. Under a rights-based approach, it aims to shift the Government’s traditional relief-oriented perspective toward more proactive and comprehensive displacement management.
- **Pakistan’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for Gilgit-Baltistan Province** includes comprehensive actions and guidelines on climate migration as an important adaptation measure for high-mountain communities affected by disasters in Pakistan.
- **Nepal’s 2013 National Disaster Response Framework** includes the preparation and preservation of open spaces for use in the event of a disaster to provide safe shelter for displaced people, a practice known as land banking.

¹ Assessment report on mainstreaming and implementing disaster risk reduction in West Africa, UNECA, 2016, p.64, for more information, see <http://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-experts-move-for-stronger-disaster-management-infrastructure-and-policyframework>.

- In 2016, the **Pacific Islands** region adopted the **Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific: An Integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (FRDP) 2017-2030** to support efforts to enhance resilience to climate change and disasters. This voluntary guideline sets out recommendations to address human mobility.
- Existing **bilateral agreements between Pacific island States** including Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea and Tuvalu, and New Zealand and Australia provide seasonal labour migration opportunities for islanders through well-managed schemes. These provide alternative income sources, reduce pressure on the environment and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills.
- **The Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016-2030 (VCCDRRP)** calls for the provision of “special support for internally displaced populations” (section 7.6.1) and the development of “a national policy on resettlement and internal displacement” (section 7.6.6). Based on this framework, in 2018 the Government approved the **Vanuatu National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement** with the aim of facilitating durable solutions for Vanuatu’s IDPs. It seeks to protect people at each stage of the displacement cycle, and promotes safe and well-managed migration as an adaptation strategy.²
- In **Fiji**, the Government has developed guidelines to support communities, who have decided to relocate to avoid the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, in planning their own relocation process.
- In **Central America**, the **Regional Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2014-2019)**, developed under the leadership of the Coordination Centre for Natural Disaster Prevention in Central America (CEPRENAC), addresses concerns international “migrants” may face as a result of disasters. The term “migrants” can be taken to include people displaced across borders by disasters, who would not normally be recognised as a legal category under national, regional or international immigration laws.
- **Brazil’s Joint National Protocol for Integral Protection of Children, Elderly and Persons with Disabilities in Risk and Disaster Situations** establishes guidelines to ensure the needs of groups with specific vulnerabilities are met, including when they are displaced by disasters.

In the context of the implementation of the Words into Action, NRC and PDD will support five countries and region, including the Andean Region (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru) through collaboration with the Andean Community’s Andean Disaster Prevention and Response Committee (CAN-CAPRADE), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), South Africa, and Mozambique. NRC and PDD previously supported the Government of Nepal in developing a draft of directives to operationalize the country’s 2007 National Policy Relating to Internally Displaced Persons (which includes disaster displacement).

B. Available data and evidence on internal displacement linked to slow-onset natural hazards in the context of the adverse effects of climate change (globally or in a specific region or country), trends and/or challenges and gaps with regards to data collection, analysis and use.

NRC recommends the development of standardized custom indicators on disaster displacement based on the work of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS) for national reporting through the Sendai Monitor. Governments report on their progress toward the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework through the Sendai Monitor. There is no target explicitly on disaster displacement, but Target B calls to substantially reduce the number of people affected by disasters globally, including

² For more information see: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press_release/file/iom-vanuatu-policyclimate-change-disaster-induced-displacement-2018.pdf

people displaced by disasters. Governments may report progress through custom targets and indicators that are defined by Member States to measure their progress against the four priorities of the Sendai Framework.³

For this question, a more detailed submission will come from NRC's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

C. Responsibility of the business sector in the prevention, response and provision of remedy to climate change-related displacement, for example by including considerations relating to climate change and displacement in human rights due diligence processes, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

NRC recommends to systematically involve the private sector, including through public private partnerships⁴ in areas such as:

- housing solutions for IDPs who cannot return,
- peri-urban food production and value chains for IDPs (for instance, drought-displaced pastoralists) who cannot go back to their former rural lifestyles,
- by indirectly supporting private service providers such as private clinics and schools (e.g. through a voucher program allowing IDPs to use them) in situations where governmental services were notoriously weak or absent even before the disaster.

D. The impact of health crises such as the current one related to COVID-19, and of the measures taken to respond to them, on climate change-related internal displacement:

- Restrictive measures taken as a response to Covid-19, including the closure of borders, are already impacting vulnerable populations seeking safety, leaving them more exposed to serious violence, or forcing them to resort to dangerous trafficking routes.
- Lockdowns and restrictions on freedom of movement as well as job losses are impacting displaced people's ability to support their families and livelihoods. Measures that limit freedom of movement participate to the temporary collapse of the informal sector, on which displaced people are heavily reliant to survive.
- Access to healthcare constitutes a major challenge for displaced people: relevant documentation allowing access to healthcare has often been lost, confiscated or was never issued as result of ongoing, pre-Covid-19 crises.
- It is likely that a lack of access to essential services and livelihoods as well as stigmatisation or discrimination will cause more new displacement than the virus itself, including secondary displacement and premature returns.⁵
- The potential actions of governments in countries where the closure of camps and/or the premature return of displaced people were political objectives prior to the pandemic is of particular concern. In parts of West and Central Africa, there are reports Covid-19 is used as a

³ Recommendation from Norwegian Refugee Council (May 2020) NRC Submission to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

⁴ Recommendation from the Norwegian Refugee Council (May 2020) NRC Submission to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

⁵ Norwegian Refugee Council (April 2020) A cough that kills people: Views on Covid-19 from Somalia's displacement-affected communities.

pretext to close displacement sites without viable alternatives and without consulting affected populations.

- In many countries where NRC works, there has been an increase in requests for rental support. Displaced people all over the world are at risk of eviction. Evicted families are likely to move in with others, which will increase chances of transmission.
- Developing and fragile countries with large displaced populations are likely to be hit hardest by economic and secondary impacts of the pandemic, including by food security consequences.
- Travel bans and other measures are also making it extremely challenging for aid organisations to reach those in need with humanitarian assistance.⁶

E. Any other information stakeholders wish to share regarding internal displacement in the context of the adverse effects of climate change.

NRC would like to highlight the importance to adopt a holistic approach to understanding the impact of climate change on the movement of people. People may also be displaced again when they move to urban centres already under pressure, or when planned relocations are unsuccessful. Displacement can be cyclical as people move back and forth from their original communities in search of security and livelihoods.⁷

F. Information on how slow-onset effects of climate change are inter-related with conflict, i.e. how climate change and conflict combine to act as drivers and causes of internal displacement, and what specific combined effects they have on internally displaced persons:

Increased stress on natural resources and displacement linked to disasters may worsen the risk of conflicts in the future. People living in conflict areas are often more vulnerable to shocks. The governments may be less equipped to respond. The areas affected can be hard to reach for relief agencies due to conflict, forcing some people to flee to areas where they can get the necessary assistance, as during the drought in Somalia in 2019.

NRC is part of the Building Resilient Communities in Somalia (BRCiS) programme. The BRCiS programme aims to help communities withstand and absorb the impact of disasters, such as drought and localised outbreaks of conflict, without undermining their ability to move out of poverty. Shaalay village, in the Lower Shabelle region, is part of the programme and was originally selected due to its high levels of vulnerability to food crisis, flood and drought. The village is constantly threatened by outbreaks of conflict and is unable to regularly access the livelihood opportunities and aid of the closest government controlled town.

However, the village shows signs of much greater stability, following a range of activities delivered through BRCiS programme, such as farmer field schools, Infant and Young Child Feeding promotion, the construction of a new shallow well, elevated water tank and solar pumping system. Despite the failure of the 2017 Deyr rains, people from Shaalay have not had to displace (unlike nearby communities) and are now starting to host IDPs from elsewhere.⁸

⁶ Impacts taken from Norwegian Refugee Council (April 2020) The Humanitarian Impact of Covid-19 on Displaced Communities.

⁷ Emad Adly (2016) Understanding the Impacts of Climate Change on the Vulnerability and Protection Needs of Communities in Djibouti and Ethiopia (Somali Region).

⁸ From Concern WorldWide (2017) Tackling food crisis in Somalia.