



Climate and Human Mobility Thematic Workshop | Paris, 28 June 2023 Summary

This note presents key take-aways from the thematic workshop on **Climate and Human Mobility** organized by the French 2022-2023 Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). The workshop, held at the French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement - AFD) headquarters in Paris on 28 June 2023 in hybrid mode, involved Member States, local and regional governments, civil society, the private sector, youth, international organizations and other institutional partners. Participants were welcomed by Mr. Gilles Kleitz, Executive Director for Sustainable Development Solutions, French Development Agency (AFD) and Mr. Christophe Guilhou, Director for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France. H.E. Mr. Stéphane Cruzat, Ambassador for Climate Change Negotiations, Renewable Energy and Climate Risk Prevention, Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France and Mr. Robert Piper, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on Solutions to Internal Displacement provided introductory remarks to frame discussions. Ms. Caroline Dumas, Special Envoy for Migration and Climate Action, IOM and H.E. Mr. Christophe Léonzi, Ambassador in charge of migrations, Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France provided concluding remarks. The workshop aims at providing insights to the roundtables of the 14th GFMD Summit, which will take place in Geneva, on 23-25 January 2024.

Key Take-Aways

Multiple factors interplay with climate change and human mobility and significantly affect prospects for sustainable development. Data shows that climate hazards associated with extreme events act as drivers of migration and displacement. Though most climate-related mobility occurs within national boundaries, with international migration movements occurring primarily between countries with contiguous borders, multiple interconnected factors are at play including demographics and a web of socio-economic factors which increase risks and vulnerabilities of populations.

Limiting global warming to reduce the impact of climate change on communities. The implementation of the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions remains a key challenge. While progress on reducing gas emissions is stalling, the impacts of climate change on communities are tangible and it is necessary to address vulnerabilities of affected populations in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and minimize the structural factors that displace populations or induce them to migrate, as stipulated by the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Recognizing migration as an adaptation strategy to vulnerabilities created by climate change. Climate-induced mobility may be forced or be a proactive adaptation strategy that allows affected populations to minimize harm and improve their life conditions. Labour migration for instance can play a positive role for affected populations and countries of origin and destination through, among others, entrepreneurship,

diasporas engagement, innovation in the green and blue sectors. The engagement of the private sector and development financial institutions in this field is key.¹

Migrants and refugees are strong contributors to the economy and culture of countries of origin and destination. Often successful entrepreneurs, thinkers and innovators, migrants play a key role for sustainable development. It is important to stress the positive contribution of migration to societies also when discussing challenges and crises linked to climate change and human mobility.

A [Summit for a New Global Financing Pact was held in Paris](#) on 22-23 June 2023 to rethink the global financial architecture and mobilize financial support for developing and low-income countries (DLICs) facing the challenges posed by excessive debt, climate change and poverty. The Summit recalled the centrality of migration for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the importance of fighting inequalities and the shared responsibility to protect the planet.

Displacement related to climate change are currently increasing. While conflict remains the major driver of long-term displacement around the world, climate-induced displacements are starting to increase in dangerous ways. Last year more people were displaced due to disasters (32 million), the highest number ever recorded, 98% of such displacements were weather related due to floods, droughts or storms. Currently, over 70% of people internally displaced by conflict live in highly climate-vulnerable countries.

Managing today's dynamics and migration challenges can help reduce the risk of displacement tomorrow. Migration is in many cases about people seeking better opportunities and can be a force for prosperity. Displacement is about being forcibly uprooted from one's home, often long-term, and it is about leaving one's assets, livelihood and community behind. The World Bank's Groundswell Reports warned that 216 million people could be displaced by 2050 due to climate. According to the same analysis, over 80% can be avoided with the right development interventions and Government leadership.

There is a need for structural responses, joined approaches and the inclusion of local governments in planning for development. Climate is one of the long-term factors driving displacement and migration, with accelerated urbanization, insecurity and loss of livelihoods. It is necessary to start planning for long-term changes and collaborating among humanitarian actors, climate adaptation and mitigation actors, migration and development actors, peace, security and financial institutions, and embracing the key role of mayors and local governments.

The establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund at COP 28 aims to provide financial assistance to nations most affected by the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters. Trends show that the more unstable a state is, the less climate finance it receives. It is necessary to make climate financing accessible to countries facing waves of displacement due to climate-related events.

The French Chair's GFMD 2022-2023 overarching priority - Climate change and human mobility - is to be addressed in line with the other priorities, such as human rights, taking into account the key role of diasporas as agents of development, the importance of labour migration, promoting well-informed public discourse on migration, and through a multi-level governance approach. Within these priorities, the

¹ This topic was explored during a thematic workshop on [The impacts of climate change on labour migration](#) organized within the French GFMD Chair's programme at the ILO headquarters, Geneva, 29 March 2023.

importance of data for policy development (panel 1) plays a central role, as well as the local dimension (panel 2) and the need for strong partnerships for action (panel 3).

PANEL 1: Understanding Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters, Climate Change and Environmental Degradation: How can data, science and local knowledge help to adopt and implement comprehensive public policies in an effective way?

Moderator: Mr. Atle Solberg, Head of the Platform on Disaster-Related Displacement (PDD) Secretariat
Panellists:

Ms. Micaela Finkielstoyne, Second Secretary at the Argentine Embassy in France

Dr. Francesco Luciani, Head of Unit Migration and Forced Displacement, DG INTPA, European Commission

Ms. Alexandra Bilak, Director of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)

Ms. Inkeri Von Hase, Global Coordinator, Making Migration Safe for Women, UN Women

Ms. Delphine Rudelli, Director General, Ceemet - European Tech and Industry Employers

Evidence-base and data gaps. While evidence corroborates that the adverse effects of climate change have a major impact on displacement and migration, and despite an increased understanding of the phenomenon thanks to an increased evidence-base, knowledge gaps exist for instance with respect to the duration of disaster displacement, the needs of people affected through forced or voluntary movements and across international borders (as most data available concerns internally displaced populations). Data gaps also exist with respect to the effects of disasters displacement on disabled, elderly persons, women, men, girls and boys. Other blind spots ensue from the fact that as temperatures increase, the effects of climate change are likely to spiral, and preparedness efforts will need to be scaled up. Climate is not the only factor, as rapid urbanization, demographic growth, vulnerabilities play a strong role. How correlations work among these drivers is still unclear. Though projections on disaster displacement are difficult to make and estimates are not the results of a precise science, it is important to take action focusing on the governance, development and financial investments.

Demystifying beliefs and using data and analysis responsibly. As the drivers of human mobility multiply, the lines between displacement and migration become increasingly blurred and it becomes increasingly difficult to attribute the reason for a movement to a single cause, especially in the case of slow onset effects. In 2022, 32.6 million movements were recorded due to disaster displacement, out of which 8.7 million were still living in displacement - not having found a solution - at the end of the year. The data sets gathered over the past 15 years have recorded 230 million disaster displacements and not exclusively affecting the global South, but also the global North. This challenges common beliefs and warrants global engagement for action. Data also indicates that the consequences of disaster displacement are similar to the consequences of conflict displacement and may affect people in the long-term.

Strengthening capacities within communities and establishing a knowledge network that fosters a global understanding through a bottom-up approach and grassroots insights. It is crucial to concentrate on action, prepare for and mitigate potential future disaster displacements. Migration as adaptation to climate change should be reevaluated to understand when migration is a suitable response and when other forms of response are more appropriate.

Balancing the narrative around climate and human mobility between denial and panic. It is necessary to move away from denial, but also avoid alarmistic announcements related to the impacts of climate

change on human mobility. Instead, a practical approach is essential, focusing on understanding the primary drivers and priority issues that need to be addressed.

Unpacking the granularity of data: The impact of climate change is closely linked to specific political, social and economic contexts. The key for effective policy making is to delve closely into the specifics of different contexts.

Translating policy into effective implementation to promote a just transition. Taking natural resources into account within the framework of climate change and human mobility allows to identify more impactful policy alternatives. Policy interventions should be tailored to address distinct elements, such as for instance gender vulnerability or land tenure, aiming to offer affected populations choices and comprehensive responses to specific needs, enabling individuals to make decisions freely rather than being compelled by events. Intervening in land tenure is a pivotal strategy to achieve this objective. Labour migrants are agents of sustainable development that can significantly contribute to a just transition. Emerging research into this area will be critical for green and blue sectors, skills matching, decent work and equitable investments.

Addressing gender impact of climate change. Climate change disproportionately affects women and girls, exacerbating existing gender inequalities. Women and girls bear the responsibility for securing food, water and fuel, but often have limited access to natural resources. Climate change escalates tensions in fragile and conflict-related settings, leading to increased risks of rights violations and gender-based violence.

Engagement of the private sector. Labour shortages and loss of skills are often compounded by a lack of dedicated measures and policies to allow migrant workers to enter relevant sectors and production lines. Within the private sector, there are industries that have taken measures to mitigate the effects of climate change on human mobility, for instance through the establishment of talent pools. Data collection efforts should inform and shape public policies and prioritize decent living and the integration of migrants in host countries. The use of data should foster efficient public policies and promote legal pathways to help match labour market demand and supply.

Innovative policies can help face the challenges at hand. In Argentina, migration is a central feature of identity and social and economic integration of migrants has made the fabrics of society what it is. A humanitarian visa for migrants from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean has recently been introduced based on data and evidence linked to climate change, environmental degradation and disasters. Terminology is often a challenge to exchange and compare data and to have a common understanding of issues and possible solutions.

Humanizing data, localizing data and telling the stories behind the numbers to develop data-driven partnerships: Data must be made understandable integrating quantitative and qualitative data, including stories of communities to foster understanding and engagement. It is key to find ways to localize global forecasting mechanisms, both for climate and migration flows as valuable information often remains confined within the UN and global-level fora, failing to reach local government officials. It is key to explore approaches that use data as a key component for collaborative efforts and build partnerships between public and private sector to address climate-related challenges, moving from the use of data for early warning to the use of data for responses fostering mitigation and adaptation measures.

PANEL 2: Local Governance in the Context of Human Mobility, Disasters, Climate Change and Environmental Degradation: How to strengthen urban and community resilience and reduce the adverse effects of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation on displacement and migration?

Moderator: Ms. Cécile Riallant, Head of Sustainable Development, IOM

Speakers:

Dr. Iniabong Abiola Awe, Director, Climate Change Department, Federal Ministry Environment, Nigeria

Mr. Yann Francoise, Deputy Director, Head, Climate Department, Climate and Ecological Transition Directorate, City of Paris

Ms. Pefi Kingi, Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO)

Ms. Verena Knaus, Global Lead, Migration and Displacement Hub UNICEF

Mr. Mayar Himayat Ullah, Mayor of the city of Mardan, Pakistan

Dr. Helen Adams, Senior Lecturer in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation, King's College London

Understanding complexities to find solutions. Cities are both destinations for mobile populations and sites that will face significant challenges due to climate change and environmental degradation. The search for solutions lies within cities and communities. There is a need to bridge the gap between local initiatives and global policy making, moving away from scaremongering narratives about climate refugees and displacement, and recognizing human mobility as a natural component of a comprehensive policy toolbox and society's adaptation to an uncertain future.

Facts and figures. As the primary destination for mobile populations, cities face substantial challenges due to increasing urbanization. It is projected that around 2.5 billion more people will reside in urban areas by 2050, with a significant concentration in Asia and the Pacific. Water scarcity will affect approximately 350 million people at 1.5 degrees warming and 410.7 million people at 2 degrees warming in urban regions. Moreover, over 1 billion individuals in low-lying cities and settlements will be at risk from coastal-specific climate hazards by 2050. Around 70% of displaced individuals live in urban environments and 20% of migrants are found in the world's 20 largest cities. Additionally, an estimated 3 billion people will require adequate and affordable housing by 2030. High climate risk extends to 33 countries worldwide, with approximately 1 billion children residing in areas highly susceptible to climate shocks. This includes 820 million exposed to heat waves, 400 million in high-risk cyclone areas, and 330 million living in urban flood-prone regions. These figures highlight the importance of addressing climate change and migration challenges at the city level.

Bringing the data and practitioners closer together. In line with the aim of the GFMD 2022-2023 France Chair's program to promote a shared and better understanding among practitioners with expertise in climate and human mobility respectively, a call was made for practitioners in the migration and development field to review the IPCC reports relevant chapters.

Integrating the most vulnerable in the discussion. It is necessary to look after the most vulnerable affected populations and make sure that they have a voice in climate resettlements.

Unlocking available resources and mobilizing climate finance funds. Effective resource allocation is paramount, including the transfer of funds from national to local governments to proactively tackle and

mitigate the impacts of climate change. Providing funds to cities can enhance preparedness, response and the development of critical infrastructures, especially for cities subject to loss and damage.

Addressing the important impact of climate shocks on children – Over 1 billion children are at risk of climate shocks, with approximately 20,000 children being displaced daily due to climate hazards in the past six years. It is crucial to implement preparedness and adaptation responses for affected communities, including social protection and education planning to ensure children's access to education.

Revamping our approach to preparedness, planning and adaptation with a more inclusive perspective. This involves integrating vulnerable populations, such as women, indigenous communities and youth in the design and implementation of policies and rethinking social protection systems as a priority. Migrant populations have specific skills, which can be promoted in a circular economy, for instance in urban agriculture.

Calling for climate justice and integrating non-economic losses. Damages go beyond infrastructure and economic impact on communities, encompassing loss of identity and culture for affected populations.

Improving data accessibility to improve inclusive policy making, using climate hotspot modeling in preparing better for migratory movements, ensuring data desegregation involving communities as a source of data collection.

Focusing on the most vulnerable communities. A primary focus of action should be on the most vulnerable communities with limited coping capacities. It is crucial to engage youth and indigenous communities to ensure successful outcomes.

PANEL 3: Promoting Effective Action through Partnerships: How to build multi-actor partnerships in the fields of human mobility, disasters and sustainable development to foster human rights, social cohesion and equitable access to resources?

Moderator: Mr. Patrick Eba, Deputy Director of International Protection Department, UNHCR

Panelists:

- **Dr. Jerry Chandler**, Director General, Directorate General of Civil Protection, Haiti
- **Mr. Sabelo Mbokazi**, Head of Division of Labour, Employment and Migration of the Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs, and Social Development (HSS) - Person in charge of advancing the AU commitments after COP27, African Union Commission
- **Ms. Giorgia Prati**, Migration, Climate Change and Rural Development Specialist, FAO
- **Dr. Roula Majdalani**, Senior Climate Change Advisor, Director General Office, International Center on Agriculture Research in Drylands (ICARDA)
- **Ms. Marie Lobjoy**, International Advocacy Officer, Secours Catholique / Caritas France (SCCF)
- **Mr. Hector Poveda**, Human Rights Specialist, Migration Youth and Children Platform (MYCP)

Stating the facts: More than 110 million people are currently forcibly displaced worldwide. Fishing areas in tropical regions may face a significant decline of up to 40% in potential seafood catch by 2050. Around 80% of cultivated land continues to rely on rain-fed agriculture. In 2021, approximately 2.3 billion people, accounting for around 30% of the global population experienced moderate to severe food insecurity.

Steering clear of two narrative pitfalls avoiding the trap of alarmism that fosters fears and nationalism and staying away from the trap of denial and complacency.

Grappling with vital cumulative vulnerability factors. The impact of climate change on displacement and migration is interconnected with various factors like conflict, governance, food security and gender inequality. It is key to acknowledge and address these issues as people's lives are not divided into isolated categories such as development, migration or displacement.

Individualizing the issues. It is important to go beyond numbers and focus on human lives, as this issue affects indigenous persons, children and young people, rural populations, refugees and those on the move; it is important to connect vulnerability, resilience and local-level solutions, and recognize the inequality we face as a global community when confronting climate change.

Building partnerships. The global community can unite and forge strong partnerships based on solidarity to meet the shared responsibility of finding effective responses to the challenges posed by climate change, migration, and displacement through multilateralism.

Addressing the nexus of human mobility, climate change and food security. Climate change has emerged as a significant driver of food insecurity, particularly affecting rural communities in low and middle-income countries and agricultural economies. The erosion of rural livelihoods can lead to increased migration pressure or heightened vulnerability to displacement. Moreover, individuals might find themselves confined to high-risk regions with limited mobility options. Climate change, while not the sole cause of food insecurity, exacerbates existing drivers and intersects with various crises, intensifying the issue.

Putting the lights on vulnerable populations. Indigenous people, especially indigenous youth, bear a disproportionate impact from climate change and environmental degradation, largely due to the profound significance of land in traditional knowledge, reliance on natural resources and climate-sensitive livelihoods for food and income. Indigenous populations often have fewer opportunities for adaptation.

Involving diaspora communities and indigenous populations in a rights-based approach. Diaspora can play an important role in emergency response and strategic planning, including prevention, preparedness and mitigation, thanks to diaspora knowledge of community-based response potential, including with respect to climate action and agricultural systems. For partnerships to yield meaningful results, they must be founded on a rights-based approach, acknowledging and safeguarding the inherent rights of indigenous peoples, including land-based aspects, self-determination and cultural preservation. In situations involving climate mobility, it is crucial to guarantee access to education, healthcare, justice and safety with indigenous voices taking the lead throughout every phase of the process.

Taking advantage of future opportunities to foster financing. COP 28 is an opportunity to stress the upscaling of finance for vulnerable countries, conflict-affected communities, migrants and displaced populations, advocating for a reform of the global finance architecture to allocate more funds for adaptation, water management, and food security in comparison to mitigation. Business also has high stakes and a key role in addressing the challenges posed by climate issues and can leverage innovative private sector funding methods.

Annex: Shared Practices

Practices shared by participants during this workshop are available [here](#)