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Title of the Session: Human mobility and Disaster Risk Reduction

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Summary

Today's population flows are unprecedented in magnitude, and represent a fundamental dynamic of societies all over the world. All movements (of internal and international migrants, displaced persons, refugees and travelers on shorter trips) have complex implications for well-being and risk levels of those moving, as well as people in their home and their host communities. Consideration of these movements is essential for the achievement and the objectives of the Sendai Framework. From a DRR perspective, it is particularly important to:

- Account for migrants and their movement in the planning, design and implementation of DRR
- Prepare for people's movement in the context of disasters, and address it as needed.

Context

Some 1 billion people in today's world are migrants (both internal and international) and tens of millions of people are displaced each year by disasters and conflicts. Many more people move every day on short and long distances on a temporary basis. These movements are a key feature of are the product, as well as a driving force of modern, interconnected societies.

All these forms of movement have complex implications on the wellbeing and risk levels of those moving, as well as of people in home and host communities. Population movements change the distribution of population, and therefore the exposure to hazards, as well as the circulation of resources and the availability of opportunities, and therefore people's vulnerability.

Migration and other population movements have received significant attention in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which highlights the centrality of some related themes for DRR work at international, national and local level. In particular, Sendai highlights that population movements contribute to strengthening the resilience of people and communities, but can also produce disaster risk – in fact almost all population movements produce a variety of diverse well-being and risk outcomes, in different places, at different times and for different people.

A few areas of work are highlighted by the Sendai Framework as priorities for DRR work focusing on human mobility:

1: Including migrants in the design and implementation of DRR efforts. This is a priority in the migrants' areas of destination, where specific efforts need to go into addressing the conditions of vulnerability migrants often face, and where it is important to actively involve them in DRR work. But it is also a priority in areas of origin, where specific efforts can go

both into reducing the vulnerability of distant community members, and in leveraging their skills, experiences and resources for DRR work. Migrants-inclusive DRR efforts also look at future population movements in order to plan land use, investments and service delivery, in a way that reduce the risk of marginalization, hardship and informality that might result from migration flows.

2: Adequately planning for, managing and addressing disaster-related movements. This includes adequately planning for disaster-induced relocations and displacement, supporting people's evacuation in times of disasters, and ensuring that people displaced by disasters are adequately assisted and are offered options to progressively improve their living conditions. This also include addressing the environmental and social impacts of such movements in areas of origin and destination.

Despite this, the SFDRR only implicitly recognizes population movements as one of the determinants of risk at the global and local levels. In particular, it makes no reference to the vulnerability and risk outcomes linked with unsafe and constrained mobility – and does not mention that migration policies, as fundamental forces shaping migration flows also have (positive and negative risk outcomes).