



# PLATFORM ON DISASTER DISPLACEMENT

FOLLOW-UP TO THE NANSEN INITIATIVE



## POLICY BRIEF

### “DISASTER DISPLACEMENT AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION”

to inform the Global Platform for Disaster Risk  
Reduction, Geneva, Switzerland, 13-17 May 2019

## THE CHALLENGE

### DISASTERS DISPLACE A PERSON EVERY SECOND.....

Disasters caused by natural hazards have displaced millions of people around the world. In 2018, 17.2 million people have been displaced in the context of sudden-onset disasters, according to estimates by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). Most **disaster displacement** is linked to extreme weather events, in particular floods and tropical storms, but also earthquakes and other geophysical hazards. The adverse effects of climate change are already increasing the frequency and intensity of weather-related hazards. As more people become exposed and are vulnerable to such hazards, disaster displacement risk is likely to continue to grow. Even without taking climate change into account, on average every given year, more than 17 million people are at risk of displacement in the context of floods alone. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects human mobility patterns will change in response to extreme weather events and climate

variability, including slow-onset events and processes such as drought and sea level rise.

Disaster displacement has devastating social and economic impacts on individuals, communities and their livelihoods. Exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities, children, women, older persons, persons with disabilities and people already marginalized are often among the most severely affected by displacement in disaster contexts. **Displacement raises multiple protection concerns.** Displacement also undermines development gains, with disproportionate impacts on least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS).

..... **WITH DEVASTATING IMPACTS ON INDIVIDUALS,  
COMMUNITIES AND UNDERMINING DEVELOPMENT**



**DRR strategies and practice** play an important role in preventing and reducing disaster displacement risk, in strengthening resilience and in addressing protection needs of people already displaced. The inclusion and meaningful participation of displaced persons in planning and response before, during and after displacement, with due attention to age, gender and diversity considerations, is essential to ensure durable solutions to their displacement and to avoid the creation of further risk.

Many initiatives and **effective practices at the national and regional level** exist, that could be shared between actors to learn from each other. As a useful and important people-centred marker of progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework, governments should **include displacement among their national DRR targets and indicators**.

*The Nansen Initiative Agenda for the protection of cross-border displaced persons in the context of disasters and climate change* has compiled several recommendations on how to strengthen the management of disaster displacement risk. Building on this work, PDD has, in collaboration with UNISDR and other partners,

- a) Mapped national and regional DRR strategies analyzing the extent to which they include disaster displacement and human mobility provisions (Yonetani, M. 2018).
- b) Developed Words into Action Guidelines supporting States to include disaster displacement provisions in their DRR strategy and planning (UNISDR, 2018).
- c) Taken stock of available disaster displacement data gaps, challenges and opportunities, and is developing a set of recommendations for recording the scale of displacement at national level and assessing impacts and future risk (IDMC, 2019).

## THE OPPORTUNITY

### DISASTER DISPLACEMENT IS RECOGNIZED IN THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK .....

The Sendai Framework recognizes disaster displacement as an important concern for people-centred disaster risk reduction (DRR) and provides many opportunities for DRR policy and practice to reduce risk and address displacement in the context of disasters and climate change.

**Target B** of the Sendai Framework aims to “substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030”. Directly affected people include those “who have suffered injury, illness or other health effects; who were evacuated, displaced, relocated; or have suffered direct damage to their livelihoods, economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets.”

Reaching **Target E** of the Sendai Framework can contribute to this goal. It aims to “substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020.” PDD encourages countries to include displacement and human mobility challenges in their new or revised DRR strategies.

### ..... AND BEYOND

Disaster displacement is also recognized as a key humanitarian and development challenge by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**) – in particular in welcoming the recommendations of the Task Force on Displacement under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage -, the Human Rights Council (Resolution 35/20), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Agenda for Humanity, the New Urban Agenda, and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration as well as the Global Compact on Refugees.

In line with the UN Secretary General’s focus on prevention, all these processes put a strong emphasis on **disaster risk management** as opposed to managing disasters and emergencies. They promote **increased investment in preparedness and risk reduction** in order to prevent and reduce displacement and mitigate its devastating impacts.

To avoid displacement from happening and to achieve better outcomes for disaster displaced persons worldwide, **it is important for these global agendas and frameworks to guide regional and national policies in a coherent manner, including towards direct support to action at the local level.**

# KEY MESSAGES AND PROPOSED COMMITMENTS FOR THE GLOBAL PLATFORM 2019

Member States are encouraged to use their **official statements, statements at ministerial roundtables** as well as **interventions in relevant plenary sessions such as high-level dialogues and working sessions or side events** to promote these key messages and make commitments.

Displacement is an important way in which disasters affect people. States and other stakeholders, in the implementation of the Sendai Framework, should step up their efforts to **reduce displacement risk and prevent displacement, strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of persons at risk of displacement, address the protection needs of displaced people and find durable solutions to displacement.**

States and other stakeholders are called upon to:

- 1 **Include disaster displacement and human mobility challenges in local, national and regional DRR strategies.**
- 2 **Integrate these strategies with relevant global, regional and national policy frameworks and strategies on climate change action, development, humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, migration management, refugee protection etc. and foster their implementation.**
- 3 **Strengthen efforts to understand disaster and disaster displacement risk and collect displacement data, and to use such information when reporting on and monitoring implementation of progress and when developing contingency, preparedness and response plans.**

## PROPOSED COMMITMENTS FOR STATES AND OTHER ACTORS AT GP2019:

- 1 to **update or develop local, national and regional DRR strategies** that include provisions on disaster displacement and human mobility, by 2020.
- 2 to ensure that **national DRR policies, strategies and plans are integrated** with policies, strategies and plans on climate change action, development, humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, migration management, refugee protection, etc.
- 3 **a.** to improve **disaster displacement data collection** and report on it at the national level (national target/s and indicator/s) and to the Sendai Framework Monitor.  
**b.** to explore the development of **national targets and indicators** on new and existing disaster displacement in

line with SDGs, for national reporting and to the Sendai Framework Monitor.

- 4 to scale up the **application of effective practices and learning** to ensure that disaster displacement is addressed and risk reduced in line with the Sendai Framework, such as, for example: identify areas that are safe for human settlement, formulate public policies on planned relocation, support transboundary and regional cooperation, promote regular evacuation drills and cross-border simulation exercises, and **implement the Words into Action** guidelines on disaster displacement.
- 5 to **allocate funding** for these measures and ensure appropriate levels of human and financial resources, including at the local level.
- 6 to designate a **governmental focal point** on disaster displacement to facilitate information sharing and, as relevant, coordination within and across ministries as well as with civil society and affected communities.

## DOCUMENTS TO CONSULT

- IDMC, 2017. Global Disaster Displacement Risk – A baseline for future work. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2Zl0zpg>
- IDMC, 2019. Global Report on Internal Displacement 2018. Forthcoming and available from 10 May 2019 from: <http://www.internal-displacement.org>
- IDMC, 2019 (forthcoming): Disaster displacement – a global review. Will be available from: <http://www.internal-displacement.org>
- IOM, 2017. Taking Sendai Forward: IOM Strategic Work Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2Wdn00h>
- UNFCCC, 2018. Recommendations on integrated approaches to averting, minimizing and addressing displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2J3SUJ5>
- UNHCR, 2018. Climate change and disaster displacement in the Global Compact on Refugees. Available from: <https://bit.ly/2IPmuma>
- UNISDR, 2018. Words into Action Guidelines on “Disaster displacement: How to reduce risk, address impacts and strengthen resilience.” Official Launch of final version at GP19. Draft for public consultation available from: <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/58821>
- Yonetani, M. 2018. Mapping the Baseline – To what extent are displacement and other forms of human mobility integrated in national and regional disaster risk reduction strategies? Available from: <http://www.disasterdisplacement.org>



## ABOUT THE PLATFORM ON DISASTER DISPLACEMENT (PDD)

The Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) is a State-led initiative. Its goal is the protection of persons displaced in the context of disasters and climate change. After Germany, Bangladesh currently chairs the PDD and will hand over to France in July 2019. PDD works across human mobility, DRR, climate change, humanitarian, development, human rights and other policy areas to support States and other stakeholders in implementing the **Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda**, which was endorsed by more than 100 governmental delegations during a Global Consultation in October 2015.

The **PDD 2016 – 2019 Strategic Framework and Workplan** include a whole set of activities focusing on DRR and the reduction of displacement risks at the international and regional levels. Its Strategic Priorities include to (i) address knowledge and data gaps, (ii) enhance the use of identified effective practices (iii) promote policy coherence and mainstreaming of human mobility challenges in and across relevant policy and action areas and (iv) promote policy and normative development in gap areas. The Strategic Framework 2019 – 2022 is currently under development.

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The **PDD Steering Group** is comprised of the following States: Australia, Bangladesh (Chair), Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Fiji, France (Vice-Chair), Germany, Kenya, Madagascar, the Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, the Philippines, Senegal, Switzerland, and the European Union. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are Standing Invitees.

The **PDD Advisory Committee** gathers experts of international and regional organizations, research institutions, academia, private sector, NGOs and other stakeholders from the fields of humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, migration management, refugee protection, disaster risk reduction, climate change action and development. Advisory Committee Members include IOM, UNHCR, UNISDR as well as the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and its Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Action Aid Bangladesh, the Alaska Institute for Justice, the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Oxfam South Africa, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, the South American Network for Environmental Migrations (RESAMA), the Stockholm Environment Institute, and a number of independent experts.

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