



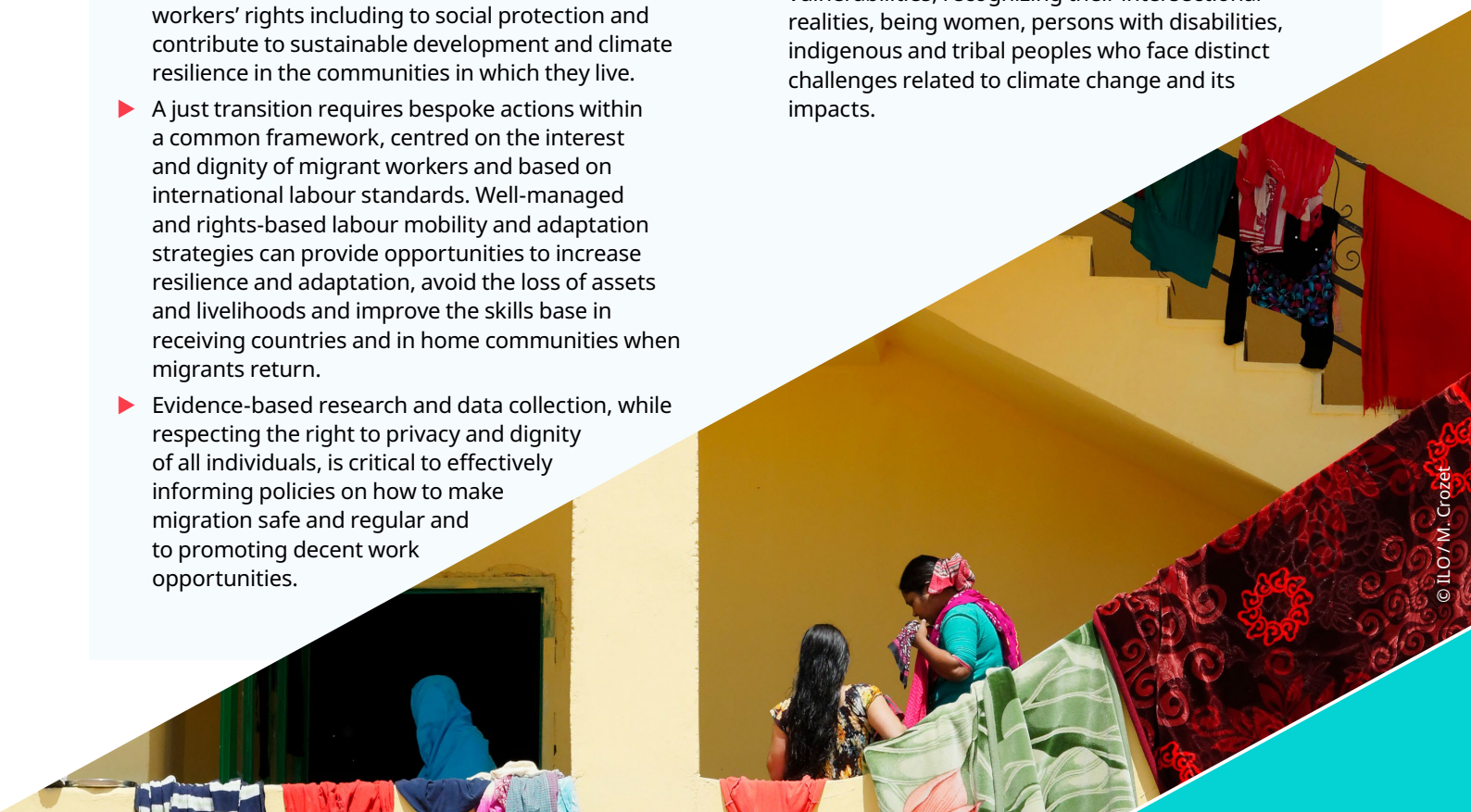
► Just Transition Policy Brief

October 2022

Human mobility and labour migration related to climate change in a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all

Key messages

- ▶ Human mobility induced by climate change may be anticipated in some situations, and thus safe, orderly and regular pathways can be better planned by governments. In the short term, including labour mobility as part of regional mobility schemes, for example, could ensure that migrants are able to meet their essential needs and live in dignity while contributing to economic productivity of receiving countries. In the long term, policy outcomes should ensure migrant workers' rights including to social protection and contribute to sustainable development and climate resilience in the communities in which they live.
- ▶ A just transition requires bespoke actions within a common framework, centred on the interest and dignity of migrant workers and based on international labour standards. Well-managed and rights-based labour mobility and adaptation strategies can provide opportunities to increase resilience and adaptation, avoid the loss of assets and livelihoods and improve the skills base in receiving countries and in home communities when migrants return.
- ▶ Evidence-based research and data collection, while respecting the right to privacy and dignity of all individuals, is critical to effectively informing policies on how to make migration safe and regular and to promoting decent work opportunities.
- ▶ Although COVID-19 has caused many workers to lose their jobs, it has also created shortages of labour in several sectors, especially in the supply chains of most receiving countries and in care work. Safe, orderly and regular migration in line with international labour standards provides an opportunity to fill these gaps.
- ▶ A just transition would ensure the inclusion of migrant workers of multiple backgrounds and vulnerabilities, recognizing their intersectional realities, being women, persons with disabilities, indigenous and tribal peoples who face distinct challenges related to climate change and its impacts.





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Background

The ILO *Guidelines for a Just Transition towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All*, adopted by representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations in 2015, provide a policy framework and an operational tool to address environmental change in a way that advances social justice and promotes decent work creation.¹ This policy brief is part of a series of briefs that seek to deepen the technical and policy understanding of the application of the Just Transition Guidelines. They are mutually reinforcing and together form a body of policy guidance on the Just Transition Guidelines.

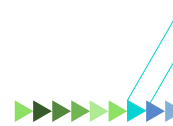
The just transition briefs are intended for use by policymakers and practitioners at all levels to provide practical information and guidance, fostering a common understanding of what is meant by a just transition in specific topic areas and providing recommendations for implementation by countries, international institutions and other actors in academia and civil society. The briefs seek, in particular, to provide guidance on just transition to ILO constituents, including workers' organizations,

employers' organizations, and governments and relevant line ministries.

The briefs cover the following thematic areas: macro-economic and growth policies; industrial and sectoral policies; active labour market policies; enterprise policies; skills development; green works; occupational safety and health; social protection; rights; social dialogue and tripartism; collective bargaining; labour migration and human mobility; indigenous peoples; gender and labour; youth employment; persons with disabilities; persons with HIV/AIDS; and financing a just transition.

This policy brief is intended to present the linkages between just transition and labour migration and human mobility, providing stakeholders with information and recommendations for implementation. The broad implementation of just transition across all policy areas and cross-cutting topics requires careful consideration of the guidance provided in the ILO Just Transition Guidelines, taking into account the needs, priorities and circumstances of each country.

¹ ILO, *Guidelines for a Just Transition Towards Sustainable Economies and Societies for All*, 2015.



1. Introduction

Two of the greatest challenges facing the world in this millennium are climate change and forced migration. Climate change and its many contributing factors are already having a significant impact on human lives and livelihoods, and, if not mitigated, will continue to lead to global warming, desertification, rise of sea levels, disappearance of islands and the increased occurrence and scale of climate-related natural disasters. The consequences of climate change frequently act as a contributing factor for the decision to migrate, whether voluntarily, involuntarily or irregularly, while the increase of unplanned and unsafe migration can have serious negative impact on the rights of migrants and the environment (for example, degradation of soil, forested land, uneven and unplanned consumption of natural resources).

According to ILO research on global warming and its impact on decent work, “higher levels of heat stress were associated with higher out-migration in recent years, suggesting households take climate conditions into account in their migration decisions”.² The most recent IPCC report paints a stark picture of displacement and forced migration from current trends in global warming, indicating for example, the following findings:

- ▶ Through displacement and involuntary migration from extreme weather and climate events, climate change has generated and perpetuated vulnerability (medium confidence).
- ▶ The number of people at risk from climate change and associated loss of biodiversity will progressively increase (medium confidence). Violent conflict and, separately, migration patterns, in the near-term will be driven by socioeconomic conditions and governance more than by climate change (medium confidence).
- ▶ Future exposure to climatic hazards is also increasing globally due to socio-economic development trends including migration, growing inequality and urbanization (high confidence).³

Without the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures, climate change is likely to result in increasing vulnerability in the world of work and lack of resources to address this vulnerability, with catastrophic impacts on groups in precarious situations (for example, children, women migrant workers and refugees, low-skilled workers, the elderly and people with disabilities), leading to further social inequity, irregular and forced migration in large numbers and increased risks of global tensions.

While predictions over the scale of migration induced by climate change may vary, the fact that climate change will increasingly influence human mobility is undeniable.⁴ As climate change can add to other key drivers of migration, including the lack of decent work and employment opportunities, one can anticipate increased mobility, including displacement due to natural disasters, internal and international labour migration as a livelihood diversification strategy and planned community level relocation when communities face conditions that make continued residence impossible, like in the case of small island developing states. Although most people who are displaced or migrating as a result of climate impacts stay within their countries of origin or close to home, climate change can also catalyse cross-border movements, including displacement, when it affects livelihoods or interacts with conflict and violence.⁵ Also, environmental challenges can be both a cause and effect of conflict and other violent encounters and trigger displacement.

Regular migration pathways for those who are on the move due to climate change impacts make it possible to protect the rights of migrants. They provide an important safeguard as migrants who are in an irregular situation can be more easily exposed to abuse and exploitation. In communities and regions, particularly those affected by climate change, migration under proper regulatory frameworks – alongside support to access livelihoods opportunities in green sectors – can also help preserve and

² ILO, *Working on a Warmer Planet: The Effect of Heat Stress on Productivity and Decent Work*, 2019.

³ Hans-Otto Pörtner et al., “Summary for Policymakers”, in *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, eds. Pörtner et al. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 3–33.

⁴ Zickgraf, Caroline, “Human Mobility and Climate Change: Migration and Displacement in a Warming World”, *ECDPM Great Insights* 8, Issue 4, 2019; IPCC, “Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis.” August 2021.

⁵ Government of the United States, White House, “Report on the Impact of Climate Change on Migration”, October 2021; UNHCR, “Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020”, 2020, p. 26.

replenish the resource base of vulnerable regions. Importantly, migration which is managed under proper rights-based regulatory frameworks can help to reduce exploitation and other harm to affected workers and their families/households – including those migrating and those remaining in their countries of origin.⁶

It is essential to support voluntary and regular migration in the context of climate change. However, because forced migration and undocumented or irregular migration will continue to be a reality, this policy brief addresses all forms of mobility related to climate change, both voluntary and involuntary. Also, the brief uses the term human mobility to cover displacement, migration and planned relocation.⁷

2. Inclusive and coherent climate change and migration policies and strategies

As stated in the Just Transition Guidelines, coherent policies can and should support development outcomes for all, including migrants: “coherent policies also need to provide a just transition framework for all to promote the creation of more decent jobs, including as appropriate: anticipating impacts on employment, adequate and sustainable social protection for job losses and displacement, skills development and social dialogue, including the effective exercise of the right to organize and bargain collectively.”⁸

Coherence is required across the policy cycle, from inception to implementation to monitoring and evaluation. It further requires whole-of-government approaches, bringing together the work of ministries working on environmental issues and those working on migration issues. Integrating migration into national climate change and adaptation planning, and climate change issues into migration- and labour-related planning, is key for ensuring this coherence.

To identify the root causes of climate-induced mobility and to design interventions for human mobility that are inclusive, environmentally sustainable and allow for decent work, it is essential to focus on the development of evidence-based analysis (knowledge products) on the linkages between climate change, mobility and decent work. Based on these analyses, steps would also have to be taken to develop working and sustainable business relations and interactions between migrants and host communities in order to achieve collective and resilient prosperity for all.

► Improving migration governance

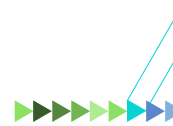
Adopted by Heads of State and Government and High Representatives in 2018, The Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) states that migration “is a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalized world, and that these positive impacts can be optimized by improving migration governance”. At the same time, one of its primary objectives is to “Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin”.

Source: UNGA, *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, (A/RES/73/195) 10 December 2018.

6 Michelle Leighton and Meredith Byrne, “With Millions Displaced by Climate Change or Extreme Weather, Is There a Role for Labor Migration Pathways?” Migration Policy Institute, 2017.

7 The concept of human mobility, although not legally defined, broadly includes displacement (where people are forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence), migration (movements that are predominantly voluntary) and planned relocation (organized relocation, ordinarily instigated, supervised and carried out by the state with the consent or upon the request of the community); see UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, *Decision 1/CP.16 Cancun Climate Change Adaptation Framework*, Para. 14(f).

8 ILO, *Guidelines for a Just Transition*, p. 6.



► **UNFCCC guidance on migration, including labour migration and displacement due to climate impacts**

The Task Force on Displacement, established in 2018 by the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP), developed a set of recommendations under the UNFCCC Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage Associated with Climate Change for “integrated approaches to avert, minimise and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change”. In alignment with the Agenda 2030, one of its recommendations (33f) focuses on the need to:

Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, as appropriate and in accordance with national laws and policies by considering the needs of migrants and displaced persons, communities of origin, transit and destination, and by enhancing opportunities for regular migration pathways, including through labour mobility, in consistent with international labour standards, in the context of climate change.



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3. Advancing just transition through a labour mobility lens

Many migration policies do not yet address mobility linked to climate change. As outlined in the Just Transition Guidelines, a just transition is meant to avoid involuntary migration and to address needs of both internal and international migrant workers. Regions vulnerable to and affected by climate change and prone to natural disasters, as well as potential receiving regions, should plan ahead to develop the capacity of key institutions. These include economic and labour ministries, ministries of the environment and disaster risk management agencies (among others) as well as workers’ and employers’ organizations. The aim is to build their ability to address and mitigate the negative impacts of sudden- and slow-onset climate change impacts. Moreover, just transition strategies call for understanding mobility or migration induced by climate change not merely as a challenge but also as an opportunity that can support the recognition of migrant workers’ rights and ensure that their needs

are addressed through existing frameworks and well-planned programmes.

An approach that puts vulnerable population groups at the centre of its analysis can also support a swifter recovery in the aftermath of natural disasters. It can do this by focusing on green and decent employment creation and safe and dignified migration strategies that are inclusive and that benefit migrant workers. Re-skilling migrant workers according to labour market needs, ensuring their social protection and productive employment opportunities can actively support the transition to an environmentally sustainable economy and society.

Greater inclusion of climate induced migrants in adaptation planning

The protection and needs of migrants should be at the heart of all adaptation planning. According to the IPCC: “Increasing adaptive capacities minimises the

negative impacts of climate-related displacement and involuntary migration for migrants and sending and receiving areas (high confidence). This improves the degree of choice under which migration decisions are made, ensuring safe and orderly movements of people within and between countries (high confidence).⁹

To this end, it is crucial for governments, employers' and workers' organizations to include migrants' voices in any planning or decision-making, as is called for in the Just Transition Guidelines. Governments play an important role by providing inclusive social protection to make the transition just for all, including migrant workers and their households. The consideration of gender is quite important. Household needs of male and female migrant workers are different as are those of different ethnicities and religion. The Just Transition Guidelines encourage governments to "promote and establish adequate social protection systems providing healthcare, income security and social services, in line with international labour standards also with a view to increasing resilience and safeguarding populations...". They can further "facilitate bilateral discussions on the portability of social protection entitlements in situations in cross-border displacement, including those due to the transition to environmentally sustainable economies and climate change impacts".

For adaptation planning it is essential to invest in the skill enhancement of workers in green jobs and green entrepreneurship. Hence, skills development mechanisms for all vulnerable population groups could allow migrants and host communities to have the same opportunities – facilitating fair and accessible green business development services for both. Establishing skills recognition in various occupations and sectors in destination countries and with business engagement, can help climate-affected migrant workers become well matched to jobs and training opportunities. Similar processes in countries of origin would make it possible for returning migrant workers to use the skills and talent they gained in the migration process to rebuild their home communities.

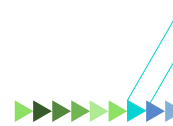
International labour standards in support of a just transition and towards the protection of migrants impacted by climate change

It is paramount that international labour standards (ILS) be the basis on which governments design strategies and consultations leading to bilateral agreements or within regional free movement protocols. This applies to all work sectors and dialogues with workers, both women and men.

Important pillars in reaching the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the ILO's Decent Work and Fair Migration Agendas are the ratification and implementation of the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) and Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) and their accompanying Recommendations No. 86 and No. 151 along with the Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118) and the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).

In ensuring secure livelihoods and working conditions for workers, especially climate-induced migrant workers, the following are significant: the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) and the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) (see box). The ILO's guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market also provide importance guidance that can pertain to climate-displaced migrating persons.

9 IPCC, *Summary for Policymakers*, p. 25.



► R205 – Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience

Recommendation 205, adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2017, provides guidance to Members States on taking measures on employment and decent work in response to crisis situations that arise from conflicts and disasters, with a view to prevention. It provides for the need to pay special attention to population groups and individuals who have been made particularly vulnerable by the crisis, including, but not limited to, children, young persons, persons belonging to minorities, indigenous and tribal peoples, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, migrants, refugees and other persons forcibly displaced across borders.

Efforts should be made to integrate these recommendations and guidance into policies. Policies should include incentives for climate induced migrant workers in the informal economy to enter the formal economy. The recommendations by the Task Force on Displacement provide further relevant guidance on labour mobility and are in line with international labour standards.¹⁰

Social dialogue on just transition and human mobility

Social dialogue is one of the four pillars of the ILO's decent work agenda, alongside employment creation and sustainable enterprise development, social protection, standards and rights at work, and a safe and healthy environment. Therefore, to promote decent work in the context of labour mobility, adequate, informed and ongoing consultation should take place with workers' and employers' organizations at all stages from policy design to implementation and evaluation and at all levels, including at national and enterprise levels. Support should be provided towards the development of a social dialogue mechanism on just transition and human mobility.

Measures could be taken to develop research, knowledge products and evidence-based analysis on the linkages between climate, mobility and employment to be used as background documents for such policy dialogue. Focus group consultations

on developing mechanisms for a just transition should be a multi-stakeholder, tripartite process.

Research and statistical analysis towards a just transition for climate-induced migrant workers

Gender- and age-disaggregated research should be carried out where feasible to provide information on movements, trends and impacts on climate induced migrant workers, both in their countries of origin and in their countries of destination. This evidence base can be a valuable indicator of communities at risk and those already experiencing impacts of climate change and climate policies on livelihoods. This can inform policies that are more sustainable and address the needs of communities and migrants better. There can be statistical analysis on the sectors of employment in which the workers are most vulnerable to climatic and environmental factors. Analyses of skills profiles of workers seeking to move and in countries of destination with gender- and age-disaggregated data can help to show which skills workers hold and which labour shortages they may fill. Value chain analysis can help to identify sectors with potential for job creation and in which workers can be trained to access decent work and green(er) jobs. Employers and business membership organizations (EBMOs) can also play an active role in assessing skills needs among members, and this information can be instrumental in developing skills-development programmes in collaboration with government. Workers' organizations and in particular vocational, education and training (VET) institutions, play a key role. Research and data collection should be carried out on risk factors and crisis mitigation in regions vulnerable to climate change in order to maximize protection of migrant workers.

Policies for non-discrimination, inclusion and equality for migrants impacted by climate change

Equality and non-discrimination are core principles enshrined in international human rights and international labour standards, in particular the ILO Fundamental Conventions on equality and the ILO Conventions on migrant workers. States should take policy and practical initiatives to facilitate the right for all migrant workers, including those in irregular

10 UNFCCC, "Task Force on Displacement".

situations, to protect against discrimination. ILO standards on migrant workers explicitly call for equality of treatment, without discrimination based on nationality, race, religion or sex (C97, Art. 6(1)), and require that the basic rights of all migrant workers, regardless of status, be respected, including their fundamental right of non-discrimination (C143, Art.1).

In responding to discrimination arising from or exacerbated by conflicts or disasters – and when taking measures for promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery and building resilience – States must also respect, promote and realize equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men without discrimination in accordance with the fundamental ILO Conventions on equality (R205, Para. 15(a)). They should pay particular attention to establishing or restoring conditions of stability and socio-economic development for internally displaced persons, migrants and refugees (Para. 15(f)), and ensure that the human rights of all migrants and members of their families staying in a country affected by a crisis are respected on a basis of equality with those of national populations

(Para. 15(i)). Implementing these standards calls for specific steps against social and cultural stereotypes that create an atmosphere of intolerance and xenophobia, including inaccurate media reporting which can lead to discrimination, especially against migrant workers in an irregular situation.¹¹

Any policy aiming at durable solutions for disasters or longer-term slow onset climate change impacts that affect labour migration should be based on wide-ranging dialogues with employers' and workers' organizations, communities and all workers affected, including men, women, LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples. Governments should make mobility induced by climate change and related policy making an inclusive process through social dialogue involving employers' and workers' organizations, to ensure all have equal opportunities to access decent work opportunities. Planning in line with the Just Transition Guidelines can contribute to safe, inclusive and dignified process rather than ad hoc. It would not only minimize risks, but also support in enhancing climate ambition and supporting the growth of a low-carbon economy.

4. Case Studies

The Pacific Island Countries

The Pacific Islands are extremely vulnerable to climate change, with the atoll nations being particularly exposed to rising sea levels and other climate change-related natural disasters such as tropical cyclones. Migration flows include islanders permanently moving to the Pacific Rim, temporary and seasonal migration to New Zealand and Australia due to employment opportunities, intra-Pacific mobility and workers' migration into the Pacific region, as well as other non-traditional, diverse migration flows. There is emerging evidence that labour mobility is a climate resilience strategy in the Pacific Island Countries as it helps generate remittances and diversify house incomes. Migrants may also bring home new skills, expertise and knowledge.¹² Opportunities for migrant workers have increased in the last decade, particularly in the context of seasonal migration: through New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE)

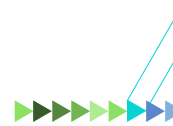
scheme in 2007 and Australia's Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme.

One initiative relevant to mobility and just transition in the Pacific Islands seeks to enhance the protection and empowerment of migrants and communities affected by climate change and disasters. Known as the "Pacific Climate Change, Migration and Human Security programme", it is implemented by a partnership of UN agencies (ILO, IOM, OHCHR and UNESCAP) as well as non-UN partners (Platform on Disaster Displacement and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat). The programme has three primary objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Pacific communities and governments demonstrate strengthened capacity and coordination through a human security-based response to climate change and disaster-related migration, displacement, and planned relocation.
- **Objective 2:** Migrants and communities in the Pacific Island Countries benefit from safe labour

11 ILO, *Protecting the Rights of Migrant Workers in an Irregular Situation and Addressing Irregular Labour Migration: A Compendium*, 2021, p. 6.

12 ILO and IOM, "Climate Change and Labour Mobility in Pacific Island Countries Policy Brief", 2022.



migration as a sustainable development and climate change adaptation strategy.

- ▶ **Objective 3:** Contribute to the evidence-base on good practices in responding to climate change and disaster-related migration, displacement, and planned relocation with particular focus on the role of the human security framework.¹³

Part of the programme rationale is based on the view that safe and fair labour mobility can be an important climate change resilience strategy. Activities include reviewing gaps, analysis and implementation of the National Labour Migration Policy for Kiribati and Tuvalu, reviewing and consultation on seasonal workers' schemes in Australia and New Zealand and training government officials and non-government stakeholders on labour migration governance in Kiribati, Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. By mainstreaming a focus on protecting the rights of migrant workers into broader work on climate change and mobility, the programme aligns with the principles of a just transition. Indeed, according to a 2019 ILO report, "the nexus between climate change, decent work and migration offers the potential for a just transition".¹⁴

The programme has also supported the development of a Regional Framework on Climate Mobility. In 2022, the first draft of the framework was under consultation, including through a regional dialogue attended by government and non-state actors from across the Pacific region. In a welcome statement to the dialogue, the Prime Minister of Fiji, Hon. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, said: "The Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility aims to guide governments in addressing these very specific legal, policy and practical issues that arise, particularly in respect to our four main types of climate mobility: displacement, migration, evacuations and planned relocation." Although the specific content of the framework has not yet been agreed, the initiative for a regionally endorsed framework on climate mobility represents a critical step toward planning for the impacts of climate change on mobility.



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The IGAD Region

Founded in 1986, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) comprises Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. These countries, most of which are classified as least-developed countries (LDCs), face significant climate change challenges. More than 70 per cent of the region consists of arid and semi-arid land and is vulnerable to continuing desertification, widespread flooding, landslides and storm damage, resulting in the destruction of property and loss of services and livelihoods. Cyclical periods of severe drought and flooding have contributed to population movements in the region.¹⁵ Conflict, civil war and social tensions also affect the region.

In 2012, the IGAD Council of Ministers adopted a regional policy framework that addresses the risk of irregular migration, recognizes the development potential of migration and calls for regulated and

13 ILO, "Enhancing Protection and Empowerment of Migrants and Communities Affected by Climate Change and Disasters in the Pacific Region", fact sheet, 2019.

14 ILO, *Future of Work for Climate Resilience in the Pacific Islands*, 2019.

15 Nyandiko, Nikodemus and Robert Freeman, *Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change Adaptation and Development Policies and their Consideration of Disaster Displacement and Human Mobility in the IGAD Region*. Norwegian Refugee Council, December 2020.

safe pathways to transform migration into an adaptive strategy.¹⁶ A specific section highlights the importance of migration-environment interrelated policies and provides a set of recommended strategies. Adopted in 2020, the *Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD Region* calls for the progressive realization of free movement of persons, and rights of establishment and residence in IGAD Member States.¹⁷ The protocol has a specific provision concerning mobility of persons affected by disaster (article 16). In 2021, its implementation roadmap was endorsed by IGAD countries' ministers of labour, interior and livestock and agriculture and adopted by the IGAD Council of Ministers. Also that year, the IGAD ministers of labour and employment committed to formulate a regional policy to address the impact of natural disaster and climate change on Member States' economies and jobs.¹⁸

In March 2017, IGAD collaborated with ILO to launch a project on the free movement of persons and transhumance in the region. Under the project framework, the ILO, in close collaboration with IGAD, has conducted a study to examine the interaction between climate change, labour market and migration.¹⁹

In May 2021, ILO with several UN agencies and the IGAD Secretariat launched their first Joint Programme in the Horn of Africa on to address drivers and facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration in the context of disasters and climate change under the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund.²⁰ This programme, in line with the vision and guiding principles of the GCM and ILO guidelines, "will help facilitate pathways for regular migration in the IGAD region and minimize displacement risk for people compelled to move in the context of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters."²¹ This is imperative because: "For a region like IGAD, where a large part of the population is highly dependent on natural resources for their economic

survival, the effect of climate change on livelihoods is likely to be a critical factor in migration decisions."

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is among those countries that are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, impacts that heighten poverty and present an obstacle to national and regional socioeconomic development. Driven by flooding or the rising salinity of land and water, people move frequently in search of habitation and work, often to already-congested cities like Dhaka and Chittagong.²²

Along with many other South Asian countries, Bangladesh has experienced displacement and people migrating for work due to natural disaster and slow-onset events such as rising sea levels.²³ The country is also hosting and accommodating tens of thousands of migrants and refugees, including more than 925,380 Rohingya refugees who have fled Myanmar.

In the context of international migration, a significant part of the national income in Bangladesh comes from the remittances sent by migrant workers working in other countries. Over the years, the remittances have helped Bangladesh grow from a low-income country into a lower middle-income country. However, migrants face many challenges, including high fees charged by recruitment agencies, especially for low-skilled jobs; low wages; a lack of information on migration opportunities and risks; discrimination, exploitation and abuse while overseas; discrepancies between contractual details and real working conditions; and insufficient services to protect the rights of workers.²⁴ These challenges are exacerbated by climate change, including regular overseas migration due to loss of habitation in low-lying coastal areas (which increased due to the reduction of employment opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic); sudden employment crises caused/increased by natural disasters; and the lack

16 IGAD Council of Ministers, *IGAD Regional Migration Policy Framework*, 2012, p. 6.

17 IGAD Secretariat, *Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD Region*, 26 February 2020.

18 IGAD Secretariat, *Djibouti Declaration on Labour, Employment and Labour Migration in the IGAD Region*, 21 October 2021.

19 ILO and IGAD Secretariat, "Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region: Improving Opportunities for Regular Labour Mobility (FMPT)", n.d.

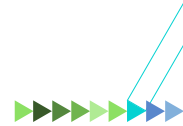
20 Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, *Regional EGAD: Facilitating Regular Migration*, 2021.

21 ILO, "UN Agencies and IGAD Secretariat Launch a Regional Initiative to Address Migration and Climate Change in East Africa," 25 May 2021.

22 Naimul Karim, "Bangladesh Climate Migrants Escape Rising Seas Only to Die in Factory Fire", Reuters, 12 August 2021.

23 Displacement Solutions, *Climate Displacement in Bangladesh*, 2012; Md Shamsuddoha et al., *Displacement and Migration from Climate Hot-spots in Bangladesh: Causes and Consequences*, 2012; Sanjoy Biswas and Md Akterul Alam Chowdhury, "Climate Change Induced Displacement and Migration in Bangladesh: The Need for Rights-Based Solutions", *Refugee Watch* 39 & 40, June & December 2012.

24 ILO, "Labour Migration in Bangladesh", n.d.



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of integration into safe working spaces for workers displaced by rapid-onset events or slow-onset processes due to climate change.

Significant efforts have been made by government authorities and non-governmental authorities to rise to these challenges. The Government of Bangladesh published a strategy in January 2021 to support displaced people within the country, with initiatives for creating employment outside of cities, ensuring migrants' rights and helping them integrate into local communities. Details on how the strategy will be implemented are to be released by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.²⁵

The process of securing decent work for all, especially migrant workers, and transitioning to a green economy involves greening existent jobs, opening new possibilities for green employment and skill-training for workers. From 2011 to 2015, the ILO supported Bangladesh in launching and accelerating the development of policy frameworks, operational effectiveness and social protection.²⁶

As part of this process, the ILO conducted a study, *Skills for Green Jobs in Bangladesh*, which considers multiple employment sectors, including refuse and waste collectors and dumpers, agricultural workers and inspectors in organic farming, one of the sectors likely to experience increased demand for green occupations. It also discusses potential new green-collar occupations such as carbon trading, solar energy engineers and technicians and mechanical engineers and CNG conversion technicians – and how these jobs can be socially inclusive.²⁷ In addition, as carbon-intensive sectors decarbonize, efforts to reduce harmful emissions could generate green(er) jobs in transportation and industries.²⁸

From 2016 to 2021, in a follow-up project on applying migration policy to create decent work for migrants, the ILO supported the development of a forthcoming National Reintegration Policy which will help returned migrants find work in the green economy.²⁹

25 Reuters, "For Bangladesh's Climate Migrants, Pandemic Job Cuts Fuel 'Multiple Crises'", *The Hindu: Business Line*, 2 October 2021.

26 ILO, "Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy and its Application in Bangladesh", 2015.

27 ILO, *Skills for Green Jobs in Bangladesh*, 2019.

28 ILO, "Bangladesh: Environmental and Sustainability Fact Sheets", 2019.

29 ILO, "Application of Migration Policy for Decent Work for Migrant Workers", 2015.

5. Recommendations

Governments

1. Promote and engage in social dialogue, at all stages from policy design to implementation and evaluation, with social partners to enable an environment for human mobility strategies.
2. Ratify, implement and monitor relevant ILO Conventions and work towards sustainable, environment-friendly goals and decent work for migrant workers.
3. Develop and implement policies receptive to and inclusive of the voices and needs of all relevant stakeholders, including migrant workers and refugees, host communities and experts. Gender and disability inclusion should be ensured while formulating just transition and labour migration policies.
4. Provide access to social protection benefits to climate-affected migrants and refugees in line with the principle of equality of treatment and the portability of benefits as outlined in ILO guidance on extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families.³⁰
5. Identify gaps, address lack of coordination and build country-level and region-level capacity to collect and monitor relevant data on climate induced migration, climate change impacts on communities and their adaptive capacity and resilience and related employment issues.
6. Promote effective investment of public funds by both host countries and countries of origin aimed at greening the economy and developing infrastructure that is sustainable and environment-friendly. Achieving these goals can be aided by following R205 and the *Guiding Principles on Access of Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market*.³¹
7. Support multilateral dialogue for safe and regular pathways for climate-induced migration and promote labour migration as a way of reducing pressure from the origin country and to fill skill shortages in the host country and encourage the hiring of climate-induced migrant labour through fair recruitment processes, informing workers of their rights and entitlements.
8. Develop and implement bilateral labour migration agreements (see R86 Annex for the model agreement) grounded in human rights, including labour rights, standards and social dialogue, with a view to providing concrete means to improve governance of labour migration and to strengthen the protection of migrant workers based on shared responsibility. The [UN Bilateral Labour Migration Guidance](#) provide advice to countries.
9. Take into consideration the IPCC's 6th assessment analysis which highlights that where climate change impacts intersect with areas of high vulnerability, and contributes to humanitarian crises and increases displacement. Climate change as a driver for unsafe migration was also highlighted in the [Progress Declaration](#), the outcome of the first International Migration Review Forum in May 2022. Building on this, it would be important to integrate human mobility scenarios in climate change policies, plans and actions including in national adaptation policies and national disaster risk reduction policies.
10. Labour migration policies should consider climate change as a driver of labour migration. Key to this will be recognizing that the Paris Agreement, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and ILO's Just Transition Guidelines, as these are interlinked and provide a mutually reinforcing framework that should be implemented simultaneously as promoted by the [UN Network on Migration climate change workstream](#).
11. Scale-up action to operationalize [recommendations by the Task Force on Displacement](#) under the UNFCCC Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage Associated with Climate Change.
12. Engage with workers' and employers' organization to develop nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans, with attention to the importance of including labour migration and protection measures for climate-induced migrants.
13. Devise policies for returning migrants that enhances their security and support their labour market reintegration.

30 ILO, *Extending Social Protection to Migrant Workers, Refugees and their Families: A Guide for Policymakers and Practitioners*, 2021.

31 ILO, *Guiding Principles on Access of Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market*, 2019.



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regular migration of people affected by climate change, by enhancing bilateral and multilateral dialogue/cooperation and the availability and accessibility of regular migration pathways and ensuring decent work for migrant workers.

4. Prioritize access to sustainable and predictable resources for vulnerable countries, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states, to strengthen their capacity for adaptation

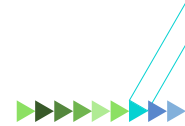
6. Conclusions

There is urgent need to address the multiple ways in which people experience mobility linked to the impact of climate change and to work towards reducing displacement. This requires appropriate action to protect people who live in climate-impacted areas and to facilitate planned movements as well as to protect and create new opportunities for those who are moving. The formulation of effective policies and plans will require systematic data collection and monitoring of climate-induced displacements and migrations – as well as impact studies at local, national, regional and international level – to inform comprehensive needs and risk assessments.

to climate change and focus on migration, by expanding and increasing contributions to the Green Climate Fund and Global Compact on Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund.

5. Place greater attention, including through additional research, on the situation of internal migrant workers who share many of the vulnerabilities of the international migrant workers but tend to remain less attended to despite their high estimated number.

Designing a just transition approach should be a dialogic process that includes the voices of employers' and workers' organizations, civil society organizations and the migrants and host communities. The transition can only be just if all migrant workers are included, regardless of their status or type of employment, and if they are empowered to contribute towards building a low-carbon economy. A just transition could ensure that migrant workers have access to decent jobs and can contribute to greening the economy by producing environmentally friendly products.



In policy planning and development, it is imperative to involve those affected by disasters, climate change and environmental degradation, especially those who are most likely to move in response to climate-related shocks. The needs of both internal and international migrant workers should be recognized and addressed through existing frameworks and well-planned strategies as well as through greater coherence between various frameworks.

When just transition strategies are incorporated into government and international policies on labour and migration, and international labour standards are

implemented – including those specifically designed to protect migrant workers – migration can become an adaptation strategy for vulnerable groups. In sum, when human mobility is planned through a consultative, rights-based and equitable process that adheres to ILO standards and guidelines and is based on choice, it can become a meaningful climate resilience strategy and contribute to reducing inequalities for all.

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