

5

CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

Climate change exacerbates pre-existing structural inequalities, causing damage particularly in climate-vulnerable countries of the Global South and already contributing to putting millions of people on the move or at risk of displacement. Migration policy needs to be better integrated with climate action, DRR, urban policy and humanitarian responses to internal displacement, as respective global agreements are implemented at national and sub-national levels, and policies need to protect human rights and provide resources and options for people to live safe and dignified lives. This brief presents some of the main topics discussed in two webinars regarding climate change and migration. These two webinars were part of a webinar series, organized by civil society organizations to address the most current issues on migrants' rights.

WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES, AND GETTING RESOURCES TO THE LOCAL LEVEL

Local authorities must be engaged, and they must be empowered and resourced. Although very little climate finance is getting to the local level, national strategies do get formulated through consultations including with local government officials, so strengthening the ability of CSOs and communities to engage at this level is critical, as is pushing for more finance to be made available at local level (see below).

ENSURING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND AGENCY

Seek concrete ways to mainstream the concerns, needs, and participation of women—especially poor women, women in agricultural and domestic work, older women and all women in vulnerable situations-- in both migration and humanitarian policy and action. Build on women's strengths and ensure women and girls are represented in decision-making, including by ensuring access to financial and other resources.

MIGRATION AS ADAPTATION DEPENDS ON CONTEXT & SUPPORT

Whether the people impacted view migration as adaptation depends on context, circumstances, and whether there is support to stay. Sometimes migration is viewed as a means of adaptation—and sometimes remittances from migration can even support households to adapt. But many people would prefer to stay if resources were available to help them do so, and they view migration only as a last resort for adaptation. Migration involves risk, and without support it also doesn't necessarily lead to good (and "adaptive") outcomes for individuals, households and impacted communities.

FINANCE IS A BIG ISSUE, ESPECIALLY GETTING FINANCE AND SUPPORT TO THE LOCAL LEVEL WHERE PEOPLE NEED IT.

Resources including finance are critical, but people in affected communities face many kinds of barriers accessing support. Most climate finance "provided and mobilized" by developed countries for developing countries is going to mitigation rather than adaptation. Ambitious mitigation is essential, but it is adaptation funding (especially as there is so far no dedicated loss and damage funding) that is needed for those already impacted. Enabling local authorities to work with local stakeholders to develop appropriate and holistic strategies and plans is urgently needed. But this is difficult given the siloed way that much multilateral funding works. If UN discourse treats migration as adaptation, there should be more robust support for

projects that seek to support migration as adaptation. In the short term, philanthropies may be more flexible and better able to respond to local communities' needs.

INTERNAL & INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT, AND THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THEM, MUST BE IN THE FRAME

Most climate-related migration and displacement takes place within borders. While governments refused to address internal displacement in the Global Compact for Migration (or in the Global Compact on Refugees), there is an urgent need to address internal displacement and the needs and rights of IDPs and internal climate migrants in the context of both climate policy and migration policy. In many countries, increasing numbers of people are being displaced by flooding from more severe and frequent storms. If governments are unable to address the rights, needs and wellbeing of IDPs and internal migrants, that creates pressures on cross-border migration.

A JUST TRANSITION & THE IMPORTANCE OF DECENT WORK—FOR MIGRANT WORKERS AND EVERYONE

Governments must think about what just transition means both within countries and across borders. Both climate change impacts and the transitions necessary to decarbonize economies will cause displacements. We need to be thinking about just transitions now, but also looking longer-term at making livelihoods sustainable. It may sometimes involve internal and internationally mobility, but it can't involve people having to move from one form of exploitation to another. Temporary labor visa programs that don't protect migrant workers' rights are not an appropriate response to the climate crisis or broader humanitarian crises. Occupational safety & health and freedom of association are rights. We need to be more prepared to advocate at national levels (as well as at region and international) for adequate policy responses to cross border climate-related migration--not just temporary protections, or refugee protection for just a few, or bringing in expansion of exploitative temporary worker programs. It is important to engage informed immigrant rights movements in CODs

DATA AND ACTION

Calls for "more data" should not substitute for concrete action and support where it is needed now. On the other hand, in many countries, data is necessary for affected communities to design and implement risk reduction and early warning systems. It is also often necessary for purposes of gaining finance and other resources for adaptation.