

Submission to the Task Force on Displacement Stakeholder Meeting

“Recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change”

Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice response to the Call for Submissions, on behalf of the Task Force on Displacement established by the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM), of relevant inputs and materials for the upcoming [Stakeholder Meeting](#) on *“Recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change”*

4th May 2018

Introduction

The Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice (‘The Foundation’) is a centre for thought leadership, education and advocacy on the struggle to secure global justice for those people vulnerable to the impacts of climate change who are usually forgotten – the poor, the disempowered and the marginalised across the world.

The organisation is a platform for solidarity, partnership and shared engagement for all who care about global justice, whether as individuals and communities suffering injustice or as advocates for fairness in resource-rich societies. The Foundation provides a space for facilitating action on climate justice to empower the poorest people and countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable and people-centred development.

The work of the Foundation is guided by its principles of Climate Justice, which can be found on the Foundation’s website www.mrfcj.org/about.

Relevant Inputs

Over the past two years understanding and research into the field of climate displacement has significantly increased. While this has allowed for a greater understanding and discourse around the challenges that the world faces from the tragic consequences of climate change, it has also revealed gaps that continue to exist at the procedural, capacity and participatory level. One such gap has been in the understanding of the relationship of climate displacement with the human rights of impacted populations, particularly at the negotiator level.

The Taskforce on Displacement has already undertaken a number of mapping processes, however the Foundation would like to highlight the following inputs which should inform the recommendations of the Taskforce:

- The Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice (2016) [Protecting the Rights of Climate Displaced People](#)
- Human Rights Council (2017), Human Rights and Climate Change; A/HRC/32/L.34
- United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018), Addressing human rights protection gaps in the context of migration and displacement of persons across international borders resulting from the adverse effects of climate change and supporting the adaptation and mitigation plans of developing countries to bridge the protection gaps, A/HRC/38/21
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018), The Slow onset effects of climate change and human rights protection for cross-border migrants, A/HRC/37/CRP.4

Each of these documents outlines the challenges, impacts and processes required for the better integration of human rights considerations into policies around climate displacement. The Foundation, in *Protecting the Rights of Climate Displaced People*, includes a number of relevant recommendations, including to:

- Commission and support further reporting and data collection on those who have been displaced and those who are threatened with displacement
- Engage these communities to identify priorities for action when addressing displacement issues.
- Bridge gaps in the international frameworks, particularly between the key climate change, human rights and displacement bodies to establish effective focal points for action

These are echoed in the following recommendations to Governments and other relevant stakeholders in the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' Report:

- Ensure respect, fulfilment, promotion and protection of all human rights for persons crossing borders in the context of climate change;
- Address the impacts of climate change on the enjoyment of all human rights through effective, scaled-up adaptation measures that benefit the most vulnerable, facilitate safe and voluntary movement, and minimize forced movement, including through strengthened social protection systems;
- Mobilize all necessary means of implementation for effective climate change mitigation and adaptation measures to address human rights protection gaps for persons adversely affected by climate change;

To meet these recommendations ongoing work will be required on the issue of climate displacement, particularly around the integration of human rights into displacement policy. The Taskforce on Displacement is uniquely positioned to recommend the UNFCCC to support the delivery of these recommendations through developing integrated dialogues for

better understanding across processes, and develop measures to continue this work over the coming years.

Proposed Recommendations

The role of the Taskforce on Displacement is to ‘to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.’ Engagement with the full spectrum of climate displacement is therefore necessary, and recommendations arising from the Taskforce on Displacement’s work should allow for continued engagement and work to be undertaken within the UNFCCC, in conjunction with other relevant bodies as one such integrated approach.

The recommendations of the Taskforce on Displacement should be practical and enhance the capacity of the UNFCCC and its secretariat to support countries engaging in policy making around climate displacement. At the moment the UNFCCC does not have the institutional capacity to undertake effective human rights integration into its work, or to support parties in building human rights effectively into their policy making.

On the basis of the above documents, and in the interests of ensuring that the protection of human rights are held as a paramount consideration in the recommendations of the Taskforce on Displacement, the Foundation makes the following recommendations, split according to the submission request:

Integrated approaches based on good practices and lessons learned at relevant levels (subnational to global) to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.

- *Recommends* that the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage support further reporting and data collection on the human rights and non-economic impacts of those who have been displaced and those who are threatened with climate displacement

Possible measures to address key legal, policy and institutional challenges for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.

- *Recommends* that the UNFCCC Secretariat take measures to enhance its capacity to deal with the human rights and social impacts of climate displacement, including through the development of a dedicated human rights focal point within the UNFCCC Secretariat to support the Parties to implement the Paris agreement ensuring that human rights inform climate action.
- *Recommends* that the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage convene a workshop to consider cross-cutting issues such as gender responsiveness, human rights and indigenous peoples’ knowledge and their role in delivering policies around climate displacement.

The Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice thanks the International Organisation for Migration, the Platform on Disaster Displacement and the Taskforce members more broadly for this opportunity to submit views on this important topic.