



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency



PLATFORM
ON DISASTER
DISPLACEMENT
FOLLOW-UP TO THE NANSEN INITIATIVE

Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change Pacific Regional Capacity Building Workshop

Suva, Fiji
Holiday Inn
13-14 February 2018

Concept Note

I. Background

Known as the “early warning system of the global community”, the Pacific Islands region is extremely vulnerable to climate change and faces disproportionately high disaster risks. Slow-onset processes, like rising temperature and sea level, coastal erosion and salinity intrusion are occurring at an accelerated pace due to climate change. In addition, sudden-onset events, such as floods, droughts and cyclones are common and lead to disasters, and occur alongside geophysical hazards, such as earthquakes, tsunamis and volcano eruptions. These phenomena affect all aspects of life, threatening the existence and livelihoods of Pacific communities and affecting migration patterns within and outside the region.

In this context, diverse mobility responses have emerged in the Pacific. Some people and communities have been evacuated or even displaced as a result or in the anticipation of a sudden-onset disaster, and others have migrated pre-emptively or were relocated in the face of slow-onset processes or recurrent sudden-onset events that have affected them over a long period of time. Migration, especially for economic reasons, is also used as a strategy to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and to reduce the risk of displacement in cases of disasters.¹

Internal migration from rural outer atolls to larger islands or from rural areas to urbanized centres is a significant trend in Small Island Developing States in the Pacific that will be exacerbated by climate change. This poses several challenges, including labour market saturation and the emergence of informal settlements in urban areas and labour market gaps in rural areas. It also places additional strains on a delicate ecosystem and overcrowded environment. International migration is also observed,

¹ IOM 2017. *Effects of Climate Change on Human Mobility in the Pacific and Possible Impact on Canada*. Available from: <http://www.environmentalmigration.iom.int/effects-climate-change-human-mobility-pacific-and-possible-impact-canada>.

with Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America as the main destination countries for Pacific Islanders. This movement is facilitated by preferential entry agreements and seasonal worker schemes.²

Progress on addressing these population movements has been ongoing at the regional level, mirroring developments in key global policy processes such as the UN climate change negotiations, the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and more recently the process towards a global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration. Most importantly, the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific 2017-2030 (FRDP) endorsed by the Pacific leaders takes an integrated approach to address climate change and disaster risk management and makes commitments relating to human mobility, migration, and climate change, in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other key international commitments.

In addition, the Pacific Climate Change and Migration (PCCM) Project, implemented by UNESCAP in partnership with UNDP and ILO and funded by the European Union (EU), also made significant progress on supporting countries to plan and implement national policies on climate change and migration as well as strengthening regional knowledge and policy dialogue on the impacts of climate change on migration, including labour migration. The 2013 Nansen Initiative consultations in the Pacific region also played an important role in supporting governmental and civil society's work on these issues. Building on these past efforts, the International Organization for Migration, the Platform on Disaster Displacement (follow-up to the Nansen Initiative) and other actors in the region continue to actively support governmental efforts to address displacement, migration and relocation in the context of disasters and climate change.

In the context of such advancements, it is essential that policymakers in the region have a common understanding of:

- i) the challenges and opportunities associated with human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change;
- ii) possible solutions, including examples of existing good practices, to address these challenges and harness the opportunities;
- iii) ways forward towards greater coherence among regional and national policies dealing with climate change, sustainable development, disaster risks and mobility management, which are still little connected.

To offer regional policymakers an environment to build their capacities and to engage in promoting policy coherence, a two-day regional capacity building workshop for policymakers will be organised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the state-led Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) on 13-14 February 2018 in Suva, Fiji. The workshop will build on IOM's capacity building

² IOM 2017. *Effects of Climate Change on Human Mobility in the Pacific and Possible Impact on Canada*. Available from: <http://www.environmentalmigration.iom.int/effects-climate-change-human-mobility-pacific-and-possible-impact-canada>.

programme on Migration, Environment and Climate Change³, and will be in line with IOM's Pacific Strategy 2017-2020⁴, with the strategic priorities of the state-led Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD)⁵, and with the UN Pacific Strategy 2018-2022⁶.

II. Objectives of the Workshop

This regional workshop aims i) to strengthen the understanding of key issues around human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change as well as of possible solutions; and ii) to facilitate regional dialogue and collaboration on these issues among policymakers from Pacific Island States⁷, and promote dialogue and collaboration across ministries at national level as well.

III. Expected Results

The regional workshop is expected to provide an opportunity to:

1. Build a shared understanding of the key issues around migration, displacement and planned relocation in the context of disasters and climate change at national, regional and global level, including the human rights and labour mobility implications;
2. Exchange best practices and learn from experiences gathered at the national and regional level in managing internal and cross-border population movements in the context of disasters and climate change, while identifying key challenges and opportunities for action;
3. Take stock of progress and opportunities for the integration of human mobility considerations into climate change action, disaster risk management, environmental and development policies as well as of mainstreaming of environmental change in comprehensive migration management policies, at the national, regional and global levels;
4. Discuss ways forward towards the implementation of regional and national action for a comprehensive and coherent response to migration and displacement in the context of environmental change and disasters, in line with relevant global policy commitments such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change,

³ <http://environmentalmigration.iom.int/training-manual>

⁴ IOM 2017. *IOM Pacific Strategy 2017 - 2020*. Available from: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_pacific_strategy.pdf.

⁵ PDD 2016. *PDD Strategic Framework 2016-2019*. Available from:

<http://www.environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/default/files/policy/PDD/PDD%20-%20Strategic%20Framework%202016-2019%20%28FINAL%29.pdf>.

⁶ United Nations in the Pacific 2017: United Nations Pacific Strategy 2018-2022

⁷ Tentatively: Fiji (host), Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Human Rights Council Resolution on Climate Change, and the future global compact for migration;

5. Provide recommendations for the development of a regional rights-based framework on migration, displacement and planned relocation in the context of disasters and climate change.

IV. The Participants

The workshop brings together 25-30 participants from 13 Pacific Island States, representing key national institutions responsible for such areas as disaster management, immigration, climate action, foreign affairs and labour migration, as well as practitioners from specialized regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental entities.

V. Logistics

The workshop is hosted by the Government of Fiji and is coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)⁸ in partnership with the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), and with the generous support of the Swiss Development Cooperation. Support from other key partners in the region will be sought.

The content of the workshop is based on IOM's *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Training Manual (Facilitator's Guide)*⁹, on IOM's regional and country assessments and studies conducted in the region, on the findings of the study on "Human Mobility, Natural Disasters and Climate Change in the Pacific"¹⁰ conducted by the Nansen Initiative in 2013, on the results of the UNESCAP-ILO-UNDP Pacific Climate Change and Migration (PCCM) Project, as well as other relevant regional studies.

VI. The Organizers

This workshop is organized thanks to the collaboration of the IOM and the PDD.

The **IOM, the UN Migration Agency**, is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. With 166 member states, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 150 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. IOM has been addressing the links between migration, environment and climate change for more than 25 years on all

⁸ IOM's Headquarters and offices in Suva, Bangkok and Canberra.

⁹ IOM 2015. *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Training Manual (Facilitator's Guide)*. Available from: <http://www.environmentalmigration.iom.int/training-manual>.

¹⁰ Nansen Initiative 2013. *Human Mobility, Natural Disasters and Climate Change in the Pacific*. Available from: http://www.nanseninitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/BP_Human_BP_Mobility_Natural_Disasters_and_Climate_Change_in_the_Pacific.pdf.

fronts, research, policy and operational and at all levels, global, regional and national, including in the Pacific region, where the organization has offices in Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. IOM is also engaged in a number of partnerships, including the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative, and the PDD.

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The **PDD** is a state-led process that is working towards enhanced cooperation, coordination and action to improve the protection of people displaced in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change. Its main goal is to follow up on the work started by the Nansen Initiative and support States and other actors in implementing the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda that was endorsed by over 100 States in October 2015. PDD promotes concerted efforts at the national, regional and international levels among stakeholders dealing with a broad range of policy and action areas including humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, migration management, refugee protection, disaster risk reduction, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and development.

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