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Climate Change



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The Africa Climate Mobility Initiative

Shaping the Future of Mobility in Africa

Addressing Climate-Forced Displacement & Migration

A collaboration between the
African Union Commission, the United Nations & the World Bank

Background

Forced displacement is emerging as the human face of the climate crisis. There is global consensus that the impending climate crisis threatens sustainable development and the very livelihoods of people in many ways, including through the greater frequency and severity of extreme weather events, water scarcity, decreased crop yield, and rising sea levels, as well as health and sanitation challenges. As a result, the climate crisis is emerging as a key driver of forced displacement and migration. By 2050, it is estimated that over 200 million people globally may be forced to leave their homes due to climate-related reasons.

A 2018 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) forewarned that Africa will experience an accelerated rise in temperature above the global average during the 21st century. With the total population of Africa projected to double to 2.5 billion people by 2050, the continent will be profoundly affected by climate-forced displacement and migration. The sheer scale of this could intensify competition over scarce natural resources, threatening peace, stability, and prosperity—particularly in fragile regions. This could have serious implications on the continent’s prospects for prosperity, its integration efforts, and the evolution of African cities and villages.

Despite this looming global crisis, climate-forced mobility has so far had limited international “airtime.” This has prompted African countries to undertake efforts as one unified regional group through the Global Compact for Migration, adopted by the United Nations in December 2018, as well as through regional efforts of the African Union to bring about much-needed global attention to this critical issue. It is particularly relevant given the African Union’s ambitions—articulated in the 2018 protocol on the free movement of persons—to harness mobility to advance its development agenda, as well as to further its economic and political integration.

This is the focus of the Africa Climate Mobility Initiative (ACMI), a joint undertaking of the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations, and the World Bank (WB). The ACMI is designed to support the efforts of the AUC and African nations to both harness the potential of mobility in the context of the climate crisis, as well as to address climate-forced displacement and migration.

The ACMI will lead efforts to enable:

- 1) **Data for Mobility:** Invest in the evidence base through data collection, including through the development of the *Africa Climate-Forced Mobility Model* and build standing capacity for modeling of & research on climate mobility on the continent in collaboration with African research institutions and centers of excellence.
- 2) **Knowledge & Resilience:** Develop a continent-wide network of change agents from academia, policy and practice through the establishment of a dedicated *Community of Practice* that brings together and drives cutting-edge research, analysis, policy development and programming on the continent as regards the scope, opportunities, and implications of climate-forced mobility in Africa.
- 3) **Action for Impact:** Promote strategic partnerships for climate mobility on the continent through the establishment of an *Accelerator for Action* that pools resources to drive efforts to harness opportunities for economic integration and green growth while ensuring that the adverse consequences of climate-forced mobility are addressed holistically.

The Africa Climate-Forced Mobility Report

Over the course of 2020-22, the ACMI will advance its objectives through the preparation of a comprehensive report on climate-forced mobility in the continent entitled, **Shaping the Future of Mobility in Africa: Addressing Climate-Forced Displacement & Migration**, as well as an *Agenda for Action*. The report and the *Agenda for Action* will be presented on the margins of COP 27 in late 2022. This effort is supported by a wide range of actors, including the Robert Bosch Foundation, the Open Society Foundations, the Ford Foundation, the Porticus Foundation, the Mayors Migration Council, and the Union of Economic and Social Councils of Africa.

a. Scope & Objectives of the Report

The African Union Commission, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) will jointly prepare a comprehensive report on the scope, nature, implications, and response to climate-forced displacement and migration, across all relevant areas, on the African continent. They will work in close partnership with concerned UN agencies and entities, as well as all other relevant partners.

The report will lay out recommendations with a clear *Agenda for Action* for the way forward, including on adaptation, resilience-building, disaster preparedness, protection, prevention, planned relocation, and humanitarian coordination and response. The report is an opportunity to reflect on how climate action initiatives could inform the African urban and green agendas to address the drivers of climate-forced displacement and migration, including through strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacities of African communities and cities.

Furthermore, the recommendations will provide a clear roadmap on the way forward for mobilizing the international community and fostering needed partnerships for addressing climate-forced mobility on the African continent. This will be achieved through promoting sustained and proactive engagements with interested actors, such as sub-regional organizations, national governments, local authorities, academia, the private sector, and civil society. The report also will provide the scientific data, projections, analysis, and research so that policies at the local, national, and regional levels can be well-informed and properly designed.

The report is an opportunity to promote a groundbreaking new narrative in the global and regional fight against global warming, pressing for “*people-centered climate action*” in line with the Africa Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. This is especially important given that most global efforts in the climate action field have primarily focused on transforming the carbon-economy into a green-economy; the emphasis has been on the impact on institutions and industry, as opposed to individuals and communities. The African continent would greatly benefit from such a people-centered approach to climate action and is well placed to play a leading role in forging a narrative and actions with global resonance.

The report and *Agenda for Action* will play a critical role in advancing the Secretary-General’s call for strong action and the redoubling of ambition to address the climate crisis in Africa. They also will support the AUC, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and African countries and cities in developing norms, policies, and solutions for managing climate-forced displacement and migration on the continent. The ACMI will thus address two of the most challenging phenomena confronting not just Africa but also other regions around the world.

b. Working Methods & Partnerships

The report and *Agenda of Action* will be prepared by a dedicated group of international experts—the **Experts Group**—under the leadership umbrella of the Initiative’s **Steering Committee**, composed of the AUC, WB, UNDP, UNFCCC, and IOM. The Experts Group will be supported by a **Technical Advisory Group** composed of top experts in a wide range of relevant technical and thematic fields representing various UN and regional agencies, expert entities, and academic institutions. The UN Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT) will be the **Innovation Technology Partner**, supporting the Experts Group on all data, innovation, and technology aspects of the work. This effort also will be supported by a **Stakeholders Group** representing philanthropic and academic institutions, civil society, the private sector and expert entities. The efforts of the ACMI will also be supported by a **Group of Friends of ACMI** bringing together Member States that expressed interest in championing the initiative.

The IPCC, UN Habitat, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), RECs, and regional development organizations, as well as other relevant expert entities, will be invited to partner in support of this effort. The process also will involve consultations with pertinent stakeholders, including youth and women groups, civil society organizations, foundations, and academic institutions. The initiative will build on existing research and studies, avoiding unnecessary duplication, and will be informed by ongoing efforts in respective relevant fields.

c. Methodology

The report and *Agenda for Action* will be prepared in four phases to ensure a comprehensive approach in the preparation process. The four phases are:

Phase 1: Building the Africa Climate-Forced Mobility Model: Informed by best practices and lessons learned from past initiatives, particularly the work conducted by the World Bank in the context of the Groundswell report, this phase will focus on building a cutting-edge climate-forced mobility model. The model will be informed by a wide range of drivers—including rise in sea levels, desertification, land degradation, extreme weather events, landslides, floods, rise in temperatures, water scarcity, and decreased crop yield—for three time horizons: 2030, 2040, and 2050.

This work will pair Representative Concentration Pathway (RCPs) 2.6 and 6.0—low and high emissions—with Shared Socioeconomic Pathway (SSPs) 1 and 3. The emissions and development dimensions will be combined to create four scenarios: pessimistic, development friendly, climate friendly, and optimistic. The Africa Climate-Forced Mobility Model will be built on new and improved modeling inputs, including as regards sudden-onset events and urban growth over time, conflict, as well internal and cross-border migration. This exercise will be conducted by experts at the Earth Institute of Columbia University, in close collaboration with experts from a wide range of expert entities and academic institutions.

In addition to the quantitative work, the building of the model also will be informed by the outcomes of mixed-methods research on the circumstances of affected populations in a sample of seven hot spots - areas across the continent that will be pre-identified as potentially affected or currently affected by climate-forced mobility. This research will aim to capture the narrative of affected populations and stress the circumstances of these vulnerable communities. Such an approach will ensure that the model is fully informed by the human and policy dimensions of the climate emergency. The exercise will involve some 1,000 interviews, as well surveys of affected households and individuals. This exercise will be conducted by the Mixed Migration Centre of the Danish Refugee Council, in close collaboration with expert entities. This phase will be at the core of the Initiative's goal to foster an evidence base through data collection and building standing capacity for modeling climate mobility.

Phase 2: Consultations, Key Findings & Analysis: Informed by the Africa Climate-Forced Mobility Model and the outcomes of mixed methods research, this phase will focus on studying key findings, analyzing possible trends, and examining the potential impact of climate-forced displacement and migration for each of the four scenarios. The Experts Group will coordinate a series of consultations based on a mapping of relevant topics, partners, and stakeholders, including policymakers, representatives of African institutions and international organizations, academia, civil society, philanthropy and the private sector. The primary aim is to ensure a shared and authoritative analysis of the research findings and their implications for various geographies, communities, sectors, and constituencies. This phase will be structured to enable the emergence of a continent-wide network of change agents and the establishment of a dedicated *Community of Knowledge*, as a key goal of the Initiative is to empower African knowledge for local solutions.

Phase 3: Observations & Recommendations: This phase will focus on developing observations and devising recommendations on possible policy measures to address climate-forced displacement and migration. The effort will be informed by engagements with relevant policymakers at the local, national, regional, and continental levels on possible ways—and needed policies—to comprehensively address climate-forced mobility on the continent.

Phase 4: The Agenda for Action: Informed by the outputs of phase three, and in the lead-up to COP 27, this phase will focus on prioritizing among the report's recommendations to distill a concise *Agenda for Action* for African policymakers at various levels of governance, as well as for their international partners and stakeholders from the multilateral system, civil society, philanthropy, and the private sector.