



Displacement and the Climate Crisis: The imperative of localized, inclusive and gender-responsive climate action

Sponsors and Organizers:

Sponsors: Bangladesh, Dominican Republic, European Union and United States of America

Organizers: CARE International, IFRC, IOM, OCHA, UNHCR, World Vision International

Date and Time: Monday, 20 June from 8.30-10am (NY time) - virtual

This is one of the virtual side events to be convened on the margins of the 2022 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS) and the ECOSOC Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development, which builds on this year's HAS theme: *“Strengthening humanitarian assistance: good practices and mobilizing action in the application of international humanitarian law, the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and in response to the climate crisis.”*

Background and objectives of event:

Disasters and the adverse effects of climate change have become an ever more significant driver of displacement and increasingly complicate the search for solutions for those already displaced. The World Bank estimates that 216 million people could be forced to move internally by 2050 in just six regions due to climate change if immediate action is not taken.

Against this background, the UN Secretary-General's recently issued Action Agenda on Internal Displacement calls for a dramatic scale-up of our efforts on risk reduction, preparedness and climate change adaptation, with particular consideration for those countries that are highly vulnerable, whose capacities are overstretched, or that are already grappling with disaster displacement or other forms of loss and damage linked to the adverse effects of climate change.

The Action Agenda also highlights the importance of ensuring that risk reduction, preparedness and adaptation efforts are pursued with the active participation of **local communities**, including indigenous populations. Indeed, local authorities, civil society organizations, women-led organisations, faith actors, and others in



affected communities – including displaced persons and their hosts – are the first responders in humanitarian emergencies, including those amplified by the climate crisis. Moreover, they are the most knowledgeable about their own needs, and the best advisers on what approaches are suited in their local area. Locally driven solutions and mechanisms, through inclusive and just processes, and the strengthening of local institutions, are also essential to assist people to adapt to climate change, mitigate disaster risks, and prevent displacement.

Climate change deepens existing gender inequalities, disproportionately impacting women and girls. When displaced, they often face increased protection risks such as gender-based violence, exploitation and trafficking and reduced access to health-services. Socio-cultural norms, restricted livelihood options, and lack of access to safety nets, technologies, and information often limit displaced women's adaptive capacities, regularly compounded by their lack of financial assets and limited rights to land and property. While progress has been made on the development of laws, policies, and strategies on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, these are not sufficiently gender responsive. The leadership and active involvement of women and girls in the design of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, including to prevent and mitigate displacement is essential to finding climate solutions and holding decision-makers accountable to their commitments to addressing climate displacement, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, The Global Compact on Refugees, and the Grand Bargain, amongst others. Women and girls have a unique perspective and knowledge to contribute to action and decision-making on building resilience of their communities. Failing to leverage their local knowledge may perpetuate inequalities and decrease effectiveness of action. **Gender-responsive approaches to the climate crisis** require that women play a critical role in response and prevention, both locally and at the leadership level.

Discussion points or guiding questions:

The proposed side-event will bring together Member States, representatives of displaced communities, UNHCR, IOM, IFRC, World Vision International and CARE International. Panellists will offer perspectives and analysis on **the impact of the climate crisis on local communities, taking into account social and gender norms**. The panel will highlight the ways in which **local knowledge and initiative contribute to climate action**, especially climate change adaptation and solutions, and how it can **reinforce the resilience of displaced and host communities in climate hotspots**.

The discussion will be informed by perspectives from the ground, as well as examples of a **locally-led, inclusive, rights-based and gender responsive approach to climate action**. Panellists will discuss how to build on existing practices and ensure that climate action in the context of displacement puts people at the centre and ensures meaningful, informed and effective participation of women and girls with diverse backgrounds in relevant decision-making processes.

While the importance of localized, inclusive and gender-responsive interventions – and of involving youth, women and men equally in climate action processes and in the development and implementation of national climate policies – are widely acknowledged, the panel will further examine gaps and challenges with regards to their implementation on the ground.

Key concrete action points and recommendations / take away messages:

- Climate change affects different parts of the world differently, requiring a concrete evidence base of good practices to assist policymakers and practitioners to ensure that efforts addressing climate-related displacement are tailored to the diverse needs and respecting the rights of the people affected.
- Local actors, including forcibly displaced communities and their hosts, must be at the forefront of preventing, adapting to and responding to climate-related displacement.
- Gender-responsive approaches to the climate crisis require that women play a critical role in response and prevention, both locally and at the leadership level. Failing to leverage their local knowledge may perpetuate inequalities and decrease effectiveness of action.
- While examples of policies, plans and interventions exist that demonstrate the potential for inclusive, gender-responsive solutions to prevent and respond to displacement in the context of climate change, these should become the norm and they should be sustainably resourced.
- The negative effects of climate change on society, including forced displacement, are not inevitable: through appropriate measures and policies reducing disaster risks, promoting development, strengthening communities' resilience, and facilitating orderly migration as a strategy, coupled with effective climate change mitigation efforts, we can adapt to the challenge if action is taken immediately and accelerated.
- Climate adaptation financing is a priority and should be directed more to the countries most vulnerable to climate change, with amongst them many countries facing displacement and humanitarian emergencies.
- Addressing climate-related displacement requires efforts across all phases of disaster and crises (prevention, preparedness, climate adaptation and risk reduction, crisis and disaster management, response, recovery, and solutions) and should amplify localized and gender-transformative responses, to allow people to stay, support displaced people or those on the move, and support people to move in an orderly fashion when necessary or preferred.

Format of the side event:

Virtual panel discussion focused on challenges and good practices, followed by a Q&A session.

Opening: Ambassador Rabab Fatima of Bangladesh.

Panel composition:

- *Mr. Mohamad Atiqul Islam – Mayor of Dhaka North, Bangladesh, co-lead of the C40-MMC Global Mayors Task Force on Migration and Climate Change and C40 Vice-chair on migration;*
- *Ms. Glynis Harrison, Secretary-General of the Namibia Red Cross Society;*
- *Mr. Jorge Galeano, Executive Director, World Vision Honduras and Guatemala;*
- *Ms. Nadeen Abdulqader, Representative Tamdeen Youth Foundation, Yemen.*

Remarks towards the end:

Representative from the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations.

Chair, moderator and closing:

Panel will be co-chaired and wrapped up by:

IOM's Deputy Director General for Operations, Ugochi Daniels, and
UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner Kelly T. Clements

Background Material:

- CARE International (2020) [Evicted by climate change: confronting the gendered impacts of climate-induced displacement](#)
- DPPA (2022), [Building a Bulwark against Climate Risks](#)
- IFRC (2021), [Displacement in a changing climate: Localized humanitarian action at the forefront of the climate crisis](#)
- IOM (2021), [Institutional Strategy on Migration, Environment and Climate Change 2021–2030](#)
- IOM and UN-OHRLLS (2019), [Climate change and Migration in Vulnerable Countries – a snapshot of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States](#)
- UNDRR (2019), [Words into Action guidelines - Disaster displacement](#)
- World Vision International (2021), [Climate Action: A Policy Position](#)
- UNHCR (2022), [Strategic Framework for Climate Action](#)

Connection details to join the event

<https://t.ly/A-qN>

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