



THE
NANSSEN
INITIATIVE

DISASTER-INDUCED CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT

DISASTERS AND CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA: EMERGING NEEDS, NEW RESPONSES

OUTCOME REPORT

Nansen Initiative Central America Regional Consultation

San José, Costa Rica, 2-4 December 2013

DISASTERS
CLIMATE CHANGE AND
DISPLACEMENT

EVIDENCE
FOR ACTION

PARTNERS





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FOREWORD BY THE NANSEN INITIATIVE SECRETARIAT

This report summarizes the outcomes of the second Nansen Initiative Regional Consultation that took place from 2-4 December 2013 in San Jose, Costa Rica: *“Disasters and Cross-Border Displacement in Central America: Emerging Needs, New Responses.”*

The overall objective of the Central American Consultation was to identify specific challenges facing the Central American region related to cross-border displacement and disasters caused by natural hazards, and to develop concrete, practical, policy and programmatic outcomes in response to these challenges. The consultation brought together more than 100 representatives from seven Central American countries (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama), countries beyond the region (Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Norway, Switzerland, and the United States), international organizations, international experts, NGOs, civil society and faith-based organizations.

Conclusions from the consultation took the form of an outcome document, which was presented to the Government of Costa Rica by a drafting committee, comprised of delegates from each State as well as representatives from civil society and academia, on the last day of the Consultation. The outcome document contains conclusions and recommendations that require action within five technical areas (Chapter II.2). A summary of the panel discussion can be found in Chapter II.3. Participants at the workshop expressed their commitment to bringing the outcomes of the Regional Consultation to a political level in order to enhance national, regional and international efforts to address the needs and challenges associated with cross-border displacement in the context of natural hazards, as well as the effects of climate change.

The Government of Costa Rica hosted the Consultation with operational, practical and logistical support from the Nansen Initiative Secretariat in Geneva and the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPRENAC). The Consultation was supported financially by the European Commission.

The **Nansen Initiative** on disaster-induced cross-border displacement is a state-led, bottom-up consultative process intended to build consensus on the development of a protection agenda addressing the needs of people displaced across international borders in the context of disasters, including those linked to the effects of climate change.

To begin the Nansen Initiative process, five regional consultations will be held in the Pacific, Central America, the Horn of Africa, South-East Asia and South Asia over the course of 2013-2014. These consultations will bring together representatives from states, international organizations, NGOs, civil society, think tanks and others key actors working on issues related to displacement and disasters, including those linked to climate change. The outcomes from these consultations will be compiled in preparation for a global consultative meeting planned for 2015, when representatives of interested states and experts from around the world will discuss a potential ‘protection agenda’ for cross-border displacement in the context of disasters. The Initiative does not seek to develop new legal standards, but rather to discuss and build consensus among states on the potential elements of a protection agenda, which may include standards of treatment. Its outcomes may be taken up at domestic, regional and global levels and lead to new laws, soft law instruments or binding agreements.



1. OUTCOMES OF THE NANSEN INITIATIVE CENTRAL AMERICAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

1.1 MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA

H.E. Enrique Castillo Barrantes
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Costa Rica

Participants of the Nansen Initiative Regional Consultation in Costa Rica have met with one goal in common - to generate consensus on a protection agenda that addresses the needs of people displaced across borders by disasters and the adverse effects of climate change.

For many decades Costa Rica has adopted sustainability as a development model, in particular recognizing its responsibility at national level. Thus, we generate over 90 per cent of our energy by using renewable energy sources and we have converted more than 25 percent of our territory into national parks. These and other efforts, especially in a small country like mine, however, may not be sufficient without being able to count on the commitment of all countries to reduce the adverse effects of an unbalanced environment and commitment by all to increase the resilience of our communities.

“ *It should be noted that as independent nations, and as a region, we have made great strides in disaster prevention and response.*”

We have been witnesses to the climate vulnerability the world is facing. We have seen it in the recent typhoon Haiyan (2013) and super storm Sandy (2012). Our region does not escape it: Central America and the Caribbean is one of the regions most vulnerable to natural hazards, whose impact often lead to disaster and internal and external displacement. We have unhappy memories of, for example, Hurricanes Fifi (1970), Joan (1988), and Mitch (1998), the earthquake on Haiti, and droughts in the Dry Corridor (Corredor Seco).

Disasters, whether they are sudden- or slow-onset, have the potential to cause internal and cross-border migration and displacement. More and more people have been forced to leave their country fleeing disasters and seek refuge in neighboring countries, and in particular those disasters caused by climate change. Unfortunately, in many instances, international law does not protect them.

Acknowledging the challenge posed by the current situation, we celebrate the launch of the Nansen Initiative and the process of consultation and exchange of experiences, which is part of this Regional Consultation.

It should be noted that as independent nations, and as a region, we have made great strides in disaster prevention and response. Today Central America can draw on policies, mechanisms and tools to coordinate its actions and improve the protection and assistance provided to our populations. CEPREDENAC is perhaps the most important example. The work done by this institution should be considered good international practice, and as such it has been recognized by the Sasakawa Award in 2011. We are also a region of strengths and opportunities.

We have embarked on an important journey together and made important strides in many fields. We have learned that the topic of disasters and cross-border movements is a complex issue that should be studied from its many dimensions, with special consideration of the humanitarian aspect. The issue that brings us together today should not be seen as limited to a specific sector; it is much larger than that.

This is why I am very pleased to see experts and professionals from different fields of knowledge and expertise at this Regional Consultation. Our analysis on the emerging challenges and new responses must start from a holistic, interdisciplinary approach. I welcome the participation of experts from different fields: environment, migration, refugee issues, border management and customs, civil protection and disaster response, human rights, and of course, humanitarian law, among others.



This Regional Consultation is the second consultation within a broader global consultative process. As you know, the first Regional Consultation was held on Rarotonga, Cook Islands: “Human Mobility, Natural Disasters and Climate Change in the Pacific.” In 2015, we will meet again to discuss and address all the results from the Regional Consultations in a global inter-governmental meeting that will discuss an agenda for the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters, and point to further follow-up processes.

The year 2015 promises to be a year of great proposals for humanity. We will put forward and lay the foundation for new directions for our societies. Two major processes come to mind in particular, and it is important that in the next few days we have them in mind: the revision of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (HFA2), and the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Objectives.

These three processes are expressions of the same challenge, and as such must be addressed with a holistic and integrated approach. We have a great opportunity before us.

“ The year 2015 promises to be a year of great proposals for humanity... We have a great opportunity ahead of us.”

1.2 CONCLUSIONS: NANSEN INITIATIVE CENTRAL AMERICAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

The following outcome document from the Nansen Initiative Central American Regional Consultation, prepared and drafted by a drafting committee and based on outcomes from the technical workshop, was presented to the Government of Costa Rica and Heads of Delegation from the other countries on the last day of the Consultation (please also see the next chapter):

DISASTERS AND CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA: EMERGING NEEDS, NEW RESPONSES

Conclusions: Nansen Initiative Regional Consultation, San Jose, Costa Rica 2-4 December 2013

More than 100 Participants from Central American countries, Mexico, Colombia, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, representatives from the Nansen Initiative, as well as representatives from regional and international organizations, civil society, and research institutions, met in San Jose, Costa Rica from 2-4 December 2013 for the second Nansen Initiative Consultation on “Disasters and Cross-Border Displacement in Central America: Emerging Needs, New Responses.” The majority of participants recognized cross-border displacement in the context of disasters as a very important issue for the region. They welcomed the Nansen Initiative, which is a state-led, bottom-up consultative process intended to build consensus on a protection agenda addressing the needs of people displaced across international borders in the context of natural disasters, as well as the effects of climate change.

Participants recognized the existence of national and regional comprehensive disaster risk management policies and mechanisms that have been developed in response to the many natural hazards in the region, which include hurricanes, flooding, landslides, tsunamis, earthquakes, drought, and volcanic eruptions. At the same time, they highlighted that disasters have prompted millions of people to flee not only internally, but also across international borders within Central America and the surrounding region, recalling in particular the experiences of Hurricane Fifi in 1974, Hurricane Mitch in 1998, and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Participants recognized that climate change is increasingly affecting the region, for example through the increased frequency and intensity of hydro-meteorological storms, and reduced accumulated precipitation in the Dry Corridor. Coastal erosion, flooding, and the salinization of fresh water sources and agricultural land associated with sea level rise have also prompted some communities, including indigenous communities, to plan for the relocation of their villages to higher ground.

Participants recalled that the Regional Climate Change Policy specifically addresses the need to develop national strategies related to “the evacuation, temporary and permanent relocation and immigration of populations most affected by increased and reoccurring extreme climate.” Participants noted that people use migration as a last resort to ensure livelihoods.

Participants expressed that, while most of the displaced remain within their own countries where they are protected by national legislation, there are certain legal gaps for the protection of those displaced across borders, and these need to be addressed as an increasingly relevant issue. States need to prepare for the arrival of people displaced by disasters and the challenges of cross-border humanitarian assistance.

Participants stressed the role of comprehensive disaster risk management measures to prevent, mitigate and respond to cross-border displacement. At the regional level, participants reiterated the importance of regional coordination within the context of the Central American Integration System (*Sistema de Integración Centroamericana* - SICA) and, in particular, identified the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (*Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres Naturales en América Central* - CEPREDENAC) and the Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (*Política Centroamericana de Gestión Integral de Riesgo de Desastres* - PCGIR) as important tools for reducing vulnerability and enhancing the resilience of communities in areas at risk of natural hazards.

Participants acknowledged the region’s historical experience in providing protection and assistance to displaced persons in disaster situations. Participants expressed concern about the challenges of identifying disaster-displaced persons within the context of larger mixed migration flows within and through the region. They were concerned about the particular risks of gender based violence, generalized violence, organized crime, illicit trafficking of migrants, and trafficking of persons that exacerbate existing vulnerabilities of people, in particular women, girls and boys displaced across borders in the context of disasters. They also identified the challenge of protecting

property and livelihoods. Participants stressed the particular needs of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. Participants also expressed concern about the protection needs of migrants caught up in disaster situations.

Participants identified the Central American Commission of Migration Directors (*Comisión Centroamericana de Directores de Migración – OCAM*), the Regional Conference on Migration (*Conferencia Regional sobre Migración – RCM*) and the Cartagena +30 process as relevant regional forums for continuing the regional dialogue on the protection needs of people displaced across borders by disasters, and the adverse impact of climate change.

Participants highlighted the importance of finding durable solutions for the displaced that allow them to rebuild their lives and end displacement. Return to and reintegration in their place of origin is the preferred solution; and when this is not feasible, reintegration in another location within their own country. However, permanent admission and integration in the country of refuge should not be excluded, in particular when in the aftermath of a disaster the country of origin is unable to reintegrate those who left, or when displacement has become protracted. Finding durable solutions remains a challenge, particularly due to insufficient funding, lack of information, and weak coordination and cooperation between relevant stakeholders. Participants also emphasized the need to respect the rights of affected people, families and communities to participate and be informed about decisions that are important for them.

Participants recognized that, while in some countries international agreements and existing national laws provide certain protection for persons displaced across international borders in the context of disasters, such as by granting temporary protection status, complementary protection, or humanitarian visas, these measures are often based on an *ad hoc* response. There is still a legal gap regarding the protection and assistance needs of persons displaced across borders. Participants highlighted the fact that sustainable return to the country of origin and other integrated durable solutions ending the displacement remain a challenge.

Participants agreed that preparedness and response to disaster-induced cross-border displacement requires coordinated action to be taken at community, national, regional and international levels. They identified five areas where action is needed:

1. Disaster Risk Management: Prevention of and Preparedness for Displacement

- Incorporate internal and cross-border disaster-induced displacement scenarios within instruments like National Disaster Risk Management Policies and National Systems for Civil Protection, as well as in the Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (PCGIR), the Central American Regional Mechanism for Mutual Assistance and Coordination (*Mecanismo Regional de Ayuda Mutua ante Desastres - MecReg*), the International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms (*Mecanismos de Asistencia Humanitaria Internacional - MIAH*) and the revision of the Hyogo Framework for Action.
- Harmonize relevant definitions and concepts at the regional level regarding comprehensive disaster risk management and displacement.
- Promote the integration of activities aimed at strengthening the resilience of communities at risk of displacement in development plans and actions, against the various risks particularly in the context of climate change, to protect water catchment areas and to recover hydrographic basins and vulnerable coastal areas.
- Create a methodology for developing participatory assessments on the sociocultural aspects of communities displaced across borders.
- Develop bi-national and regional contingency plans that identify risk scenarios and formulate comprehensive disaster risk management actions to reduce vulnerability and strengthen capacity to respond to cross-border displacement.

2. Migration and Border Management in Disaster Contexts

- Promote and harmonize the use of humanitarian visas for the admission of persons displaced by disasters.
- Develop criteria for identifying persons eligible to receive humanitarian visas.
- Protect the human rights of people moving across borders against return to their country of origin as long as their lives, personal integrity and health are at risk.
- Explore possibilities to ensure that beneficiaries of humanitarian visas have access to comprehensive and durable solutions when their visas expire.
- Consider protections measures for all migrants when their countries of origin are faced with emergency situations caused by disasters.
- Recommend the development of guidelines that are applicable in the region within the context of the Regional Conference on Migration's (RCM) work.

3. Protection during Cross-Border Displacement in Disaster Contexts

- Ensure, in disaster situations, respect for the human rights of persons displaced across borders, especially the right to personal integrity, family unity, food, health, shelter or adequate housing, access to education and respect for their culture and language.
- Strengthen effective measures in responding to disasters to protect women, boys and girls, against violence, including gender-based violence, as well as people with specific needs and vulnerabilities during displacement, such as older persons and persons with disabilities.
- Include the specific needs, cultural rights, and social rights of displaced indigenous communities and ethnic minorities in public policy, and disaster and emergency response plans.
- Create bi-national mechanisms to ensure the protection of livelihoods and property of persons displaced across borders.
- Ensure all migrants have access to humanitarian assistance and protection in disaster situations, as well as consular services from their country of origin.
- Take steps to ensure that people affected by a disaster are consulted, informed and actively participate in the planning and delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as planning for finding comprehensive and durable solutions.
- Develop strategies for integrating the human rights of persons displaced across borders within policies, plans, protocols and programs at the local, national and regional levels.
- Strengthen training, awareness raising and capacity-building on the protection of people displaced across borders within disaster risk management, in accordance with local, national, regional mandates and competencies, both institutionally and multi-sectorally.

4. Durable Solutions for Cross-Border Displacement in Disaster Contexts

- Ensure that displaced persons across borders have access to adequate information that will allow them to make a voluntary decision, based upon the available options, for comprehensive and durable solutions, particularly return.
- Ensure a comprehensive approach to finding durable solutions that takes into account measures regarding adequate housing, re-establishment of livelihoods, access to basic services and the need for affected populations to participate in the planning and implementation of such measures.
- Strengthen the country of origin's effort to seek comprehensive and durable solutions, with the participation and commitment of development actors and the development sector as a whole from the initial stages, with a focus on including comprehensive risk management and climate change adaptation in local, national and regional development plans.
- Improve the coordination of inter-governmental mechanisms to implement integrated and durable solutions, especially for return, building upon the bi-national actions and practices that currently exist.

5. International Coordination and Cooperation for Cross-Border Displacement in Disaster Contexts

- Incorporate the issue of cross-border displacement within the context of comprehensive risk management and in the guidelines and procedures of the Central American Regional Mechanism for Mutual Assistance and Coordination (MecReg), including regional manuals and protocols for humanitarian assistance, management and administration.
- Ensure efficient coordination between affected countries, humanitarian agencies, and development agencies in planning and response efforts, based on the principles of the United Nations Humanitarian Reform and the Transformative Agenda, such as leadership, transparency, accountability and predictability.
- Explore opportunities for accessing existing and new financial mechanisms at regional and international levels for comprehensive disaster risk management, assisting those displaced across borders and in finding integrated and lasting solutions.
- Establish bi-national mechanisms and protocols for the recovery and replacement of cross-border displaced persons' personal identification documents that were lost, damaged or left behind.
- Promote the Conclusions of the Nansen Initiative Regional Consultation within relevant regional and international processes, including in particular:
 - The Central American Commission of Migration Directors (OCAM), the Regional Conference on Migration (CRM), the Cartagena 30 + process, the Global Forum on Migration and Development, among others.
 - International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanism (MIAH).
 - Regional Risk Reduction Plan (PRRD) and the IV Meeting of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas.
 - Regional Climate Change Policy and the Summit of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP20).
 - Regional Communications Platform of CEPREDENAC.
 - Agenda for the sustainable development goals for people and planet.

The participants expressed their appreciation to the Government of Costa Rica for its generosity in hosting the Second Regional Consultation of the Nansen Initiative and for its willingness to take the results to relevant regional and international forum. They invited interested and relevant parties to follow up on the results of the Consultation and expressed the hope that these efforts will help to better manage cross-border movements of people in the context of disasters, including the effects of climate change, but also to alleviate the plight and suffering of affected persons, and ensure the respect and full realization of their rights.



1.3 CONSIDERATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS BY GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE NANSEN INITIATIVE¹

Members of the panel comprised of Heads of Delegation from each country welcomed a Central American regional discussion at appropriate political levels on human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change.

All delegates welcomed the Nansen Initiative as an important and relevant initiative for the region. They recognized that the outcome document reflected the essence of the discussions and conversations that had taken place at the Consultation.

Delegates expressed their commitment to bring the outcomes of the Regional Consultation to a political level in order to enhance national, regional and international efforts to address the needs and challenges associated with cross-border displacement in the context of natural hazards, as well as the effects of climate change.

¹ Norway, Switzerland, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panamá, México, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador.



2. THE TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

2.1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

2.1.1 Chairmanship of the Nansen Initiative

Norway and Switzerland

Every year, millions of people are forcibly displaced by floods, wind-storms, earthquakes, droughts and other natural hazards. In the context of global warming, such movements are likely to increase. In 2012 the Norwegian and Swiss governments launched the Nansen Initiative to address the need for a more coherent approach to the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters. The Nansen Initiative's overall goal is to build consensus on key principles and elements regarding the protection of persons displaced across borders in the context of disasters, recognizing that national and international responses to this challenge are presently insufficient and that protection for affected people is inadequate.

To obtain a better understanding of such movements, experiences, information and analysis will be collected in the framework of five regional consultations to be held in the most affected regions of the world over the course of 2013 – 2014.

This second Consultation in Central America has been particularly important because of the broad and pertinent participation from many countries in the region. It has provided opportunities to learn from policies and practice of national and regional disaster risk management policies and mechanisms that have been developed in response to the many natural hazards experienced by the region. We have also learnt from examples of policies and practices that have responded to the challenges of international protection for people displaced in the context of disasters, such as the use of temporary protection measures, humanitarian visas, and the granting of special immigration status.

Switzerland and Norway are grateful for the support of the Government of Costa Rica for hosting the Consultation, and joining global efforts to move forward toward the development of a protection agenda for cross-border disaster-induced displacement.

2.1.2 Envoy of the Chairmanship of the Nansen Initiative

Professor Walter Kaelin

Envoy of the Chairmanship of the Nansen Initiative

Central America is vulnerable to a significant number of sudden-onset disasters (hurricanes, volcanoes, earthquakes, floods, and landslides), and also has areas affected by changing pattern of rainfall variability and known as the Dry Corridor. In response, Central American states have developed strong national and regional disaster risk management mechanisms and policies that may include providing temporary protection for those seeking refuge in other countries of the region.

Looking to the future, participants in the Nansen Initiative Regional Consultation identified the need to create and/or harmonize existing temporary protection mechanisms and admission standards within the region to ensure adequate preparedness and response capacity in the event that people are displaced across an international border in the context of a disaster. In this process, they noted the importance of ensuring that temporary protection mechanisms are linked with finding durable solutions.

Participants also identified the significant protection risks that migrants face in the region in the context of other situations of violence associated with smuggling, trafficking and the drug trade, which pose similar risks for displaced persons who are likely to be the most poor and vulnerable. The consultation highlighted the particular protection needs of irregular migrants who may be caught up in a disaster context. They also noted that in some circumstances only citizens may be eligible to access humanitarian assistance, or that irregular migrants may be reluctant to seek assistance.

The particular needs of indigenous communities, including those living in low-lying coastal areas, were also identified. Finally, the participants recognized the need for states to prepare for cross-border-displacement in disaster contexts through the development of bilateral and regional contingency plans.

As the Nansen Initiative moves on to consult other regions of the world, we will share the Central American region's numerous relevant experiences and lessons learned. We also stand ready to bring the Central American region's recommendations to the global level within the Nansen Initiative Global Dialogue, planned for 2015. We hope that representatives from this Regional Consultation will join us as our partners in the Central American region.

2.1.3 Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC)

Mr. Noel Barillas
Executive Secretary

On behalf of the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC), we congratulate the Governments of Norway and Switzerland who initiated and are leading the Nansen Initiative, with the commitment and support of Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, Kenya, the Philippines, and Mexico.

“ *The Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management maintains the right to prevention as one of its fundamental principles.*”

In Central America we are very pleased to welcome this Initiative and its extraordinary articulation with our own processes.

Within the context of the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (PCGIR) was formulated and later adopted on June 30, 2010 at the XXXV Ordinary Meeting of SICA Heads of State and Government. Arguably, the PCGIR is the most important regional public policy in the area of disaster risk management.

The Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management maintains the right to prevention as one of its fundamental principles: vulnerable people and communities, as well as the ecosystems with which they interact, are entitled to the assurance that processes, plans and programs shall consider their current risk conditions and avoid the creation of new hazards and vulnerabilities through comprehensive disaster risk management.

Within the PCGIR, a central element is disaster management and recovery. The Central American Regional Mechanism for Mutual Assistance and Coordination (MecReg) is an instrument designed to quickly respond to an emergency or a disaster occurring in an affected country that requires the solidarity and humanitarian assistance of other countries (donor or transit countries). For ease of operation, the Central American countries will make every effort necessary to improve and make more agile the handling of customs and migration in situations of emergencies in the region, especially when a neighboring country offers to provide humanitarian assistance to another country.

“ *The large turn-out at the Consultation reaffirms the need for a dialogue on the subject and on the relevance of displacement caused by environmental events.*”

These measures support and complement the efforts of the Nansen Initiative and underline the need for increased partnerships and building of relationships at the technical and political level among States to construct a global humanitarian vision. Although the focus of the Nansen Initiative is on the needs of persons displaced across borders, the Initiative is closely linked with disaster risk reduction, internal displacement and migration as an adaptation measure.

It is necessary to further strengthen, at all levels, prevention, resilience and recovery, including through the allocation of adequate resources. International, regional and local actors have a shared responsibility to implement the principles enshrined in the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

On behalf of CEPREDENAC, I reiterate our strong support for this Initiative, and we urge the participants of the Regional Consultation to be faithful advocates of its principles, which are based on universal values.

2.1.4 National Risk Prevention and Emergency Commission of Costa Rica (CNE)

Ms Vanessa Rosales

President of the Costa Rican National Risk Prevention and Emergency Commission (CNE)

From the moment it was decided that Costa Rica would host the second Nansen Initiative Regional Consultation, the National Emergency Commission assumed the task as its own with great commitment and enthusiasm, leading the preparation and organization in coordination with CEPREDENAC and the Nansen Initiative. The Government of Costa Rica's active participation as member of the Nansen Initiative Steering Group also contributed to the successful organization of the Regional Consultation.

The large government delegations present at the Regional Consultation reaffirm the relevance of the issue of displacement caused by environmental events, and the necessity of starting to discuss and address the issue seriously at the governmental level in dialogue with civil society. We are joined by more than 100 representatives from migration directorates, civil protection and emergency agencies, foreign ministries, ministries of environment and development, national societies of the Red Cross, NGOs, universities, research centers and international organizations.

Central America can draw on its advanced comprehensive disaster risk management systems and mechanisms for the protection and assistance of persons affected by disasters to identify good practices and experiences. We lack knowledge and experience about how these systems can adequately respond to the specific protection needs of people displaced across borders in disaster contexts.

It is important to recognize examples of policies and practices previously used in the region to respond to international protection challenges in disaster contexts. In the case of the 2010 Haiti earthquake on Haiti, "humanitarian visas" were granted, while in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch, Costa Rica and Panama issued decrees granting Honduran citizens a special immigration status and "humanitarian visas." We expect that the region's existing mechanisms can integrate the proposals and the conclusions coming out of this Regional Consultation, in particular within the context of SICA (CEPREDENAC and PCGIR) and the Regional Conference on Migration, among others.

The Nansen Initiative is important for the region as it is particularly vulnerable to environmental hazards (earthquakes, hurricanes, etc.). The Regional Consultation is not designed as a one-off event, nor is it intended to create new process, mechanisms or institutions. Rather, the objective is to build upon and strengthen existing Central American policies and processes related to comprehensive risk management and coordination mechanisms between states to integrate humanitarian response scenarios that address displacement and disasters.

2.2 PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

2.2.1 Introduction and Structure of the Consultation

Central America is exposed to a wide variety of natural hazards, including floods, hurricanes, drought, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanoes and landslides, each of which have the potential to trigger population movements. To date, as in other regions of the world, most displacement in Central America is internal following sudden-onset disasters, with people generally able to return to their homes shortly after the disaster. Rising sea levels have also prompted some communities to begin relocating, such as indigenous communities in coastal Panama, as their lands become increasingly uninhabitable.

Each state, and the Central American region as a whole, has developed sophisticated disaster preparedness and response policies, tools, and mechanisms to coordinate actions and improve overall protection and assistance to those in need, including internally displaced persons. Yet, the region is increasingly aware of the need to prepare for potential cross-border movements. Furthermore, while existing international, regional and national legal regimes respond to some of the protection concerns arising from cross-border displacement within the context of disasters, others remain unaddressed.

The first day of the consultation included case studies and thematic presentations organized within four topical panels: 1) Cross-Border Disaster Displacement in Central America; 2) The 2010 Earthquake in Haiti; 3) Hydro-Meteorological Disasters: Lessons Learned Regarding Human Mobility during the Humanitarian Response; and 4) Slow-onset Disasters and Environmental Degradation.

The second day of the consultation was dedicated to working groups. In the morning, participants gathered in national groups, building upon their own individual reflections, to discuss how to coordinate and respond across line ministries to the challenges posed by disaster-induced cross-border displacement. In the afternoon, representatives from the national groups, as well as civil society representatives and academics, met within five different working groups organized according to technical expertise. Each group was tasked with identifying needs and challenges, highlighting existing good practices, and formulating new policy recommendations to respond to the identified gaps. The outcome of each group's deliberation was shared for plenary discussion.

The morning of the third day was dedicated to developing a strategy for incorporating human mobility in the context of disasters within existing national, regional, and international plans, policies, and processes. Par-

ticipants were also presented the Outcome Document, which was developed in a drafting committee comprised of delegates from each State, as well as representatives from civil society and academia.

Key messages and cross-cutting issues from the consultation were as follows:

- Human mobility strategies should address the specific protection needs of particular groups, such as women, children, older persons, and people with disabilities.
- Data collection and analysis systems relevant for human mobility in the context of disasters need to be reviewed and appropriately updated to inform policy responses at all levels.

Country-specific case studies as well as thematic presentations had been prepared by governments, experts and representatives from national, international and civil society organizations. All presentations can be found at: www.nanseninitiative.org

2.2.2 Cross-Border Disaster Displacement in Central America

The first session of the technical workshop provided an overview of human mobility in the Central American region in the context of disasters and climate change. Panelists presented estimates and projections of people displaced by disasters in Central America, described migration paths and challenges in the region, discussed the integration of human mobility issues within regional disaster risk management systems, and provided an overview of existing relevant legal protection mechanisms in the region.

Key messages from the presentations and discussion:

- Overall displacement estimates in the region as presented by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) suggest that between 2008 and 2012 almost 4.4 million people were displaced in the context of sudden-onset disasters in Central America.

Presentations

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED POPULATION MOVEMENTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Alfredo Zamudio

Director, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)

Zamudio stated that sudden-onset natural hazards displaced an estimated 4.4 million people in Central America between 2008 and 2012 alone. He presented an IDMC system dynamics model for Central America, which indicates that some 300,000 people are at risk of displacement each year, primarily due to storms, floods and earthquakes. Governments were encouraged to contribute additional information to improve the accuracy of the model.

MIGRATION TRENDS, PATTERNS, AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Gabriela Rodriguez

Director, International Center for the Human Rights of Migrants (CIDEHUM)

Rodriguez highlighted overall migration trends in Central America, describing not only migration within the region, but also recognizing Central America as a strategic migratory bridge to North America. Distinguishing between voluntary migration and forced displacement, she described general trends from rural to urban areas and the high level of irregular migration in the region, identified newer emerging migration patterns in the context of generalized violence, disasters and organized crime, and discussed structural causes of migration such as poverty, social inequality, land use and environmental degradation.

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND MECHANISMS WITHIN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN INTEGRATION SYSTEM (SICA)

Victor Ramirez

Coordinador de Fortalecimiento Institucional, CEPREDENAC

Ramirez observed that while disaster risk management has been discussed at the highest political levels within SICA, the region's policies and mechanisms, namely PCGIR and MecReg, do not address human mobility issues in the context of disasters. He proposed integrating disaster displacement issues within existing tools, such as MecReg, the Regional Disaster Risk Plan (PRRD) that is currently under revision, as well as regional consultative processes linked to the Hyogo Framework revision process.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND DISPLACEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Luis Diego Obando

Associate Legal Officer, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Obando explored potential opportunities for States to improve protection and assistance for cross-border disaster-displaced people within Central and Latin America's existing legal protection frameworks, acknowledging the region's large number of displaced people, including refugees, and people fleeing generalized violence and organized crime. He identified three potential options that States could consider: 1) the broader refugee definition in the Cartagena Declaration; 2) complementary protection; and 3) humanitarian visas.

2.2.3 Case Study: 2010 Earthquake in Haiti

This session explored the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, which killed approximately 230,000 people and prompted the displacement of an estimated 2.3 million people, including some 200,000 people across the border into the Dominican Republic. Panelists described how States and humanitarian organizations responded to displacement during the emergency phase of the response, identified the immigration measures enacted to receive earthquake victims, and shared current efforts to address durable solutions for the displaced. The session was moderated by Jose Samaniego, Deputy Regional Representative from the UNHCR Panama Office, who closed the session with reflections on key themes from the panel.

Key messages from the presentations and discussion:

- The response to cross-border displacement in disaster situations necessitates a regional approach that should include both potential sending and receiving countries, and address issues of prevention of displacement (access to territory), preparation (contingency plans) and response (coordination mechanisms, and joint response and funding strategies that bring together a wide variety of stakeholders).
- The complex and multi-causal nature of cross-border disaster-induced displacement requires the development of inter-governmental protection measures that address the specific protection needs of those affected by these situations, such as humanitarian visas or temporary protection status.
- The response needs to have an integrated, human rights based approach to identify the specific protection needs of cross-border disaster displaced people from the initial phase until durable solutions have been identified and include national, regional and international actors.

Presentations

COORDINATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Valerie Julliard

United Nations Resident Coordinator, Guatemala

Julliard described the exceptional measures undertaken by the Government of the Dominican Republic in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, which included opening the border through the granting of visa waivers even without passports, conducting medical evacuations, granting multiple entry humanitarian visas for family members of medical evacuees, and developing an air bridge to facilitate humanitarian assistance. She also described the role of humanitarian actors in the Dominican Republic, such as the creation of a mirrored Cluster System and the provision of assistance to displaced people within a 20km zone within Haiti, and highlighted the need for a flexible approach to coordination, response and funding mechanisms that recognize the crucial role of neighboring countries not directly affected by the disaster, as well as the private sector.

DISPLACEMENT, MIGRATION AND MECHANISMS FOR RECEIVING DISPLACED PEOPLE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE

Patricia Weiss Fagan

Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University

Fagan described how in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, Haitians initially relied upon traditional migration pathways to the Dominican Republic, the United States, and Canada, but over time used both legal and irregular means to reach new countries, notably in South America. She highlighted the various immigration measures that States enacted to receive Haitian migrants seeking entry, noting in particular Brazil's use of humanitarian visas that lead to permanent residency after five years, the United States' activation of Temporary Protection Status, Canada's expedition of regular immigration categories for permanent residency, and numerous States issuing stays of deportation on humanitarian grounds.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 2010 HAITI EARTHQUAKE: THE EXPERIENCE OF AFFECTED GOVERNMENTS

Joe Felix and Rafaelle Robelin

*Civil Protection Directorate, Haiti and the International
Organization for Migration (IOM) Haiti*

Felix described how at the height of the crisis more than 1 million Haitians were living in IDP camps, while others had left the country for destinations in Canada, the United States, Central and South America and Senegal. Robelin explained that while the Government of Haiti is in the process of finding durable solutions for the some 172,000 people still living in camps through measures such as rent subsidies, planned relocation efforts and the construction of new homes, challenges related to financing, coordinating with development actors, and integrating durable solutions within disaster risk management strategies, hindered the process.

José Alcántara

Dominican Republic

Alcántara described lessons learned from the Government of the Dominican Republic's response to the Haiti earthquake, noting in particular the need to strengthen disaster risk management and contingency planning, coordination, training, procedures and drills in response for potential cross-border disaster displacement. He stated that as the incoming Pro-Tempore President of SICA in January 2014, the Government will propose the creation of a Centre of Excellence within the Dominican Republic.

2.2.4 Hydro-Meteorological Disasters: Lessons learned regarding human mobility within the humanitarian response

This session provided an opportunity for participants to explore the challenges that arise within the context of providing protection and assistance to people displaced in the specific context of hurricanes, floods and landslides. Panelists discussed not only the operational challenges, but also the importance of ensuring a response that is sensitive to the social and cultural needs of affected populations, how planned relocation may be one way to prevent future displacement, and an example of an immigration measure used to prevent people from returning to disaster areas before humanitarian and safety considerations can be assured. The session was moderated by Vanessa Rosales, President of CNE, who concluded the panel by providing an overview of the central themes that emerged.

Key messages from the presentations and discussion:

- Most people are reluctant to leave their homes and possessions behind in disaster contexts, moving only when absolutely necessary or even ignoring evacuation warnings, and generally want to return home as soon as possible.
- Pre-disaster plans are essential and should include measures for building durable solutions at a later stage, such as through agricultural insurance or food for work opportunities.
- Strategies for return should include plans for sustainable livelihood activities and measure to help returning populations co-exist with hazards and risk.
- Data and statistics on displaced populations is essential for helping identify the number of people displaced, where they move, and what protection and assistance needs they may have.
- The granting of a temporary protection status has advantages, such as immediate security from harm and the ability to work, but may also result in separated families and uncertainty pending a durable solution when permanent residency is not available even after many years.

Presentations

HURRICANE MITCH, 1998

Lourdes Ardon

Shelter Coordinator at COPECO, Honduras

Ardon emphasized how the Government of Honduras' disaster risk management capacity has evolved and strengthened significantly since Hurricane Mitch, although she recommended that cross-border displacement issues be integrated within national policies, noting for example, that data is not collected on the number of people displaced by disasters. She described lessons learned from the planned relocation of communities after Hurricane Mitch, identifying the need for clear planning from the early stage of the process that applies a rights based approach, the importance of continually consulting affected communities and to try to keep communities together, the need to ensure actions are culturally appropriate, and ensuring that projects are sustainable by addressing livelihood requirements in relocation areas.

HURRICANE STAN, 2005

Juana Celestian Sotz

Defense of Indigenous Women, Guatemala

Sotz described how Hurricane Stan affected some 3.5 million people, and in particular poor, indigenous communities, some of whom were displaced for over three years pending a durable solution. She said that key lessons learned included the need for: improved coordination between the government and civil society; culturally appropriate humanitarian assistance and shelter; responses to gender based violence during displacement; ensuring that children in particular receive culturally appropriate psychosocial support; and relocating communities living in areas with a high risk to natural hazards to prevent displacement.

THE RESPONSE TO THE 2011 TROPICAL DEPRESSION 12E

Jorge Meléndez

Secretary for Vulnerability Affairs and Director General of Civil Protection, El Salvador

Meléndez described how Tropical Depression 12E ultimately flooded some two-thirds of the country, causing approximately 1,300 landslides and prompting the Government to evacuate 60,000 people, most of whom sought shelter in evacuation centers. He noted that the national disaster risk management policy links 98 public and private institutions, yet in the absence of a pre-disaster plan, the Government was forced to improvise in the recovery phase to ensure that vulnerabilities were addressed, such as through the development of a small insurance plan and food for work projects.

CASE STUDY: LANDSLIDE IN ZACAPA IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LA UNION, GUATEMALA

Angela Leal

CONRED, Guatemala

Leal described how Tropical Storm Dolly caused an oversaturation of the soil that resulted in large-scale landslides and some 28,000 people to gradually leave the Municipality of La Union, with some towns completely abandoned. She explained the Government's current strategy to bring people back home, emphasizing the importance of placing the people themselves at the center of any activity, whether it be risk mapping or identifying livelihood activities to revitalize the economy, to help ensure that people can return in a manner that allows them to manage and co-exist with risk.

TEMPORARY PROTECTION STATUS IN THE UNITED STATES

Robin Bronen

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Bronen stated that to date some 300,000 people from Central America have benefited from Temporary Protection Status (TPS) in the United States, which allows nationals from a disaster-affected State who are already on United States territory to remain in the country for a period of six to eight months (extendable) with the right to seek employment, but not permanent residency. She explained that the disaster-affected State must request activation of TPS explaining why it does not have the capacity to receive its own nationals, and upon its expiry, the individual's prior immigration status is restored.

2.2.5 Slow-Onset Disasters and Environmental Degradation

This session addressed how slow-onset disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation affect human mobility, and highlighted how policy makers and affected individuals, households and communities respond to these challenges, including in urban areas. The session was moderated by Jan Breitling, Head of the Department of Environment and Development at the University for Peace.

Key messages from the presentations and discussion:

- Greater rainfall intensity and rising aridity are likely to result in increased migration, and possibly even conflict.
- Changes in climate can weaken food security and increase social vulnerability, all of which may result in increased migration, or the wish to migrate (trapped populations who do not have the possibility to move).
- Recent migrants to urban areas in the context of climate change face serious challenges that exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, particularly for the urban poor.
- The Kuna people are planning relocation efforts in light of the serious challenges they face as sea level rise affects their physical territory and infrastructure.

THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Ana Lorena Guevara

*Vice-Minister of the Environment,
Republic of Costa Rica*

Guevara presented the findings of a study by Julie Lenox of CEPAL, which, based upon historical trends between 1971 and 2010, predicts a trend of delayed rainy season with more intense rain falls over a shorter period of time, but with less overall total accumulation of rainfall likely. She therefore argued for the need to prepare for the most extreme migration scenarios related to access to water and increased aridity, which should include development plans, immigration measures, capacity building programs to strengthen regional coordination, and national policies to address the assistance and protection needs of environmental migrants.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN MOBILITY

Koko Warner

United Nations University

Warner drew upon examples from Guatemala and Mexico to explain how, in the context of climate change, people around the world use mobility as a risk management strategy to maintain their livelihoods and stabilize food security, noting that while sometimes mobility may enhance stability, for others, mobility may worsen their situation or they may not be able to at all. She also explained how international climate change policies makers are increasingly addressing human mobility issues within the UNFCCC process.

CLIMATE CHANGE, MIGRATION AND URBANIZATION

Susana Adamo

*Center for International Earth Science
Information Network*

Adamo explained how migration, climate change and urbanization processes are inter-related in Central American countries, and highlighted how migrants are exposed to particular protection risks in urban areas due to their exposure to natural hazards, lack of language skills, discrimination, and the lack of economic and social support networks. She also highlighted that 81 per cent of people living in urban areas are affected by at least one natural hazard, and that a key challenge is identifying vulnerable migrants in urban areas, noting that many of them are youth.

IDENTITY AND TERRITORY: THE CASE OF THE KUNA

Heraclio Herrera

*National Association for the Conservation
of Nature (ANCON), Panama*

Herrera described how the Kuna people on the Atlantic coast of Panama, living in 50 communities on multiple islands, have already begun to experience flooding within the center of their islands due to sea level rise. He explained how the Ukupseni 2000 Project and the Garti Sugdub community are undertaking plans to move to the mainland, including the construction of schools, hospitals and an environmental office, highlighting the challenges of reaching consensus within the community, reaching the final stage of physically moving the people, ensuring national laws address climate change issues, and working the communities to preserve traditional knowledge and reduce consumption that contributes to waste.

2.2.6 National Working Groups

Workshop participants in this session gathered in national groups, building upon their own individual reflections, to discuss how to coordinate and respond across line ministries to the challenges posed by disaster-induced cross-border displacement. Similar to the response from individual participants, most groups recognized cross-border displacement in the context of disasters as a very important issue for the region.

A key message from almost all of the groups was the recognition that the issue requires a cross-sectorial and inter-institutional approach. Consequently, different competencies and mandates are required for different stages of displacement (prevention, protection and durable solutions). The groups identified the following governmental institutions as potentially assuming a lead or central role: Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Government or Ministries of Interior Affairs, National Disaster Management Offices, National Directorates of Migration, and Ministries of Environment. Most groups also highlighted the need to collaborate with a wide array of line ministries (health, justice, defense, education, etc.). They also recognized the important role of civil society, churches, private sector and international organizations in support of the response.

In terms of major challenges for a better response to cross-border displacement in the context of disasters, the groups highlighted the lack of: 1) a normative framework and protocols and standards regarding admission and stay; 2) data and information on people displaced; 3) registration tools; 4) contingency plans covering cross-border displacement (existing plans only address national situations); 5) coordination among national institutions; 5) financial resources. They also identified the need for improved disaster risk management and prevention measures.

The national working groups structured their discussion around a questionnaire. The results of each group can be found at: www.nanseninitiative.org

2.2.7 Technical Working Groups

In this session, representatives from the national groups, as well as civil society representatives and academics, met within five different working groups organized according to technical expertise. Each group was tasked with identifying needs and challenges, highlighting existing good practices, and formulating new policy recommendations to respond to the identified gaps:

- Disaster Risk Management: Prevention of and Preparedness for Displacement
- Immigration and Border Management in Disaster Contexts
- Protection during Cross-Border Displacement in Disaster Contexts
- Durable Solutions for Cross-Border Displacement in Disaster Contexts
- International Coordination and Cooperation for Cross-Border Displacement in Disaster Contexts

The outcome of each group's deliberation was shared for plenary discussion and recommendations, which were then discussed and prioritized by the drafting committee and included in the Regional Consultation's Outcome Document. The results and presentations of each group can be found at: www.nanseninitiative.org

2.2.8 Follow-up Opportunities in the Context of Existing Regional Mechanisms

The purpose of this session was to draw on Central America's strong history of developing innovative, regional approaches to respond to new developments through regional institutions, laws, operational arrangements, and policies. Participants recognized that the emerging needs associated with cross-border displacement in the context of disasters call upon the region to work together across institutions at the national, regional, and international levels to identify needs and craft an appropriate response. This session explored possibilities for developing a cross-sectoral approach within existing regional policies, mechanisms and processes by bringing together the fields of disaster risk management, humanitarian response, immigration, human rights, climate change adaptation and development.

Key messages from the presentations and discussion:

- Central America can draw upon on regional mechanisms for disaster management and response, approved by the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of SICA in 2010, to coordinate international humanitarian assistance.
- Other relevant existing platforms for coordinating humanitarian response efforts to reduce the suffering of people affected by disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean include the International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance (MIAH) and REDLAC.
- The Regional Conference on Migration (CRM) and the Central American Commission of Migration (OCAM) provide opportunities incorporate human rights and promote the link to development within migration management policies.
- Other relevant mechanisms and frameworks include national and regional climate change policies and institutions, such as the Regional Strategy on Climate Change (RSCC), the Regional Integration Strategy for Climate Change: Towards a Central American Climate Change Policy, and the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), also part of SICA.

CENTRAL AMERICAN REGIONAL SYSTEM FOR MUTUAL ASSISTANCE (MECREG)

Walter Wintzer

Disaster Risk Management Advisor

Wintzer introduced the Central American Regional System for Mutual Assistance (MecReg) within SICA, which supports international assistance in situations of disasters that affect more than one country through common frameworks and tools for response. He highlighted that each designated national Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Affairs (CCHA) could work with SICA to ensure that cross-border displacement issues are adequately addressed in tools such as the National Foreign Ministry's Manuals for Disaster Management, and within cross-border contingency planning and training exercises.

THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION

Renan Rodas Posada

Specialist, Technical Secretariat

Posada presented the work of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), also known as the Puebla Process, which brings together Central American and other Member States on issues of common concern related to migration through dialogue, research, and regional guidelines to address three key themes: i) migration management and policies, ii) human rights, and iii) the migration-development nexus. Posada stated that the RCM would be an appropriate forum for discussing the potential development and harmonization of humanitarian visas in disaster contexts.

MIAH AND REDLAC

Dario Alvarez

Disaster Response Advisor, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Alvarez presented the Inter-Agency Working Group on Risk, Emergencies and Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC), which provides training and technical support, facilitates information exchange, maintains a roster for emergency deployment, and issues operational guidance and manuals, and the Regional Meeting on International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms (MIAH). Given that both regional humanitarian coordination platforms bring together UN organizations, IFRC, IOM, international NGOs, and donors, he said that cross-border displacement issues could be usefully incorporated within their ongoing work, noting that MIAH had already included the Nansen Initiative in its work plan.

THE REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Ericka Leticia Lucero Del Aguila

Climate Change Unit, Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, Guatemala

Lucero Del Aguila presented the 2010 Central American Regional Strategy on Climate Change (RSCC) that seeks to prevent and reduce the negative impacts of climate change, particularly on the most vulnerable, by promoting activities that strengthen resilience and contribute to future reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, such as integrating climate change within disaster risk management strategies, conducting research, developing strategies for Central America in the UNFCCC negotiations, and advocating for adaptation funding mechanisms. She noted that the RSCC recognizes displacement as a potential consequence of growing climate variability associated with climate change, and thus calls on states to develop national strategies to address evacuation, temporary and permanent relocation and immigration of vulnerable populations.

2.3 FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY

Walter Wintzer

Disaster Risk Management Advisor

These two and a half days of consultation have provided an opportunity for participants to exchange views and share national experiences regarding human mobility generally in Central America and on internal displacement and cross-border displacement in the context of disasters, in particular.

Plenary sessions were rich and comprehensive and allowed for further learning, with an emphasis on the experiences of the region. Participants from more than eleven countries, government institutions, civil society, non-governmental organizations, as well as representatives of international organizations and universities, participated actively in three “moments” (individual reflections, plenary, and group work) during the Regional Consultation.

“ The large turn-out at the Consultation reaffirms the need for a dialogue on the subject and on the relevance of displacement caused by environmental events”.

The work from these three “moments” provided the material for a drafting committee, comprised of delegates from each State as well as representatives from civil society and academia, to produce the Outcome Document containing the conclusions from Regional Consultation. The Outcome Document was presented to all participants and approved in plenary on the last day of the Consultation.

Historically in Central America, the drivers of human mobility have been multiple: armed conflict, situations of poverty, disasters caused by natural hazards and environmental factors, and today's increase in violence (organized crime). Participants concluded that in most cases of human mobility it is very difficult to isolate the exact cause of cross-border movement. In the case of disasters associated with natural hazards, many examples were cited: the Managua Earthquake (1972); the Earthquake in Guatemala (1976); Hurricane Mitch (1998), which allowed citizens of El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua to temporarily legalize their immigration status in the United States of America, through the Temporary Protection Status (TPS); Hurricane Stan (2005); and the Haiti Earthquake (2010). Many of the participants stated that cross-border movement is the result of a combination of the above-mentioned factors. It was agreed that it would be important to develop national and regional agendas that raise awareness of the importance of displacement in the context of natural hazards, especially in view of the adverse effects

of climate change that will open up the discussion on migration as a potential adaptation measure to climate change.

In the context of comprehensive disaster risk management, it is essential to broadly promote increased attention and better protection for the most vulnerable, who, in situations of poverty, are at even more risk. Particular priority and attention should be paid to the needs of children, women, older persons, people living with disabilities, persons with specific protection needs, people living with HIV and AIDS, etc.

During the consultation participants discussed how in Central America, in the context of safety and security concerns, special attention should be paid to the current situation of violence and crime. The additional risk of disasters is heightened by criminal acts, particularly committed by organized crime, during internal as well as cross-border displacement. Some of the biggest challenges include the issue of public safety and how to protect the physical integrity and property of displaced people, as well as the protection of migrants' rights (such as regularization of their temporary or permanent status) when migrants are in need of humanitarian assistance when abroad after a disaster.

It is essential to plan for durable solutions for those who are displaced across international borders. A situation of indefinite displacement should not be promoted. That said, returning affected communities to their places of origin should only be pursued in the context of living conditions that equal, or are even better than, they had before the disaster.

Participants identified and agreed upon opportunities to insert the issue of cross-border displacement in the context of disasters into technical and political agendas at national, regional and international levels.



3. ANNEXES

3.1 AGENDA

Consulta Regional de la Iniciativa Nansen
San José, Costa Rica

Hora	Actividad
LUNES 2 DE DICIEMBRE	
08:00	Inscripción de participantes
08:30	<p>Ceremonia de inauguración y palabras de bienvenida</p> <p>Honorable Señor Noel Barillas <i>Secretario Ejecutivo de CEPREDENAC</i></p> <p>Señora Vanessa Rosales <i>Presidenta de la Comisión Nacional de Emergencias (CNE)</i></p> <p>Honorable Señora Ana Tiraa <i>Representante del Gobierno de las Islas Cook</i></p> <p>Excelentísimo Señor Embajador Jan Gerhard Lassen <i>Representante de la Presidencia de la Iniciativa Nansen (Gobierno de Noruega)</i></p> <p>Excelentísima Señora Embajadora Yasmine Chatila Zwahlen <i>Representante de la Presidencia de la Iniciativa Nansen (Gobierno de Suiza)</i></p> <p>Señor Enrique Castillo Barrantes <i>Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, República de Costa Rica</i></p>
09:15	<p>Prof. Walter Kaelin <i>Enviado de la Presidencia de la Iniciativa Nansen</i></p> <p>Descripción general de la Iniciativa Nansen y los antecedentes para la consulta en América Central</p>
09:30	Pausa de café
09:45	Introducción a la consulta

10:00	<p>Desplazamiento transfronterizo en América Central</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimaciones y proyecciones de movilidad humana por desastres naturales Alfredo Zamudio, <i>Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, IDMC</i> • Tendencias migratorias, Pautas y Marcos Legales de Migración en América Central Gabriela Rodríguez, <i>Centro Internacional para los Derechos Humanos de los Migrantes, CIDEHUM</i> • Mecanismos y políticas del Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana en la gestión integral del riesgo, SICA Víctor Ramírez, <i>SE-CEPRENAC</i> • Retos de protección en el marco de los desastres naturales en América Central Walter Wintzer, <i>CEPRENAC/Iniciativa Nansen</i> • Protección internacional y desplazamiento en América Latina Luis Diego Obando, <i>Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados, ACNUR</i>
11:30	<p>PANEL 1: PRESENTACIÓN DE ESTUDIO DE CASO: TERREMOTO EN HAÍTÍ, 2010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinación en el marco de Naciones Unidas Valerie Julliard, <i>Coordinadora Residente del Sistema de Naciones Unidas en Guatemala</i> • Desplazamiento, migración y mecanismos de recepción de desplazados en el contexto del terremoto de Haití Patricia Weiss Fagan, <i>Georgetown University</i> • Experiencias de gobiernos y lecciones aprendidas de países afectados Rafaelle Robelin, <i>OIM Haití</i> Joe Felix, <i>Dirección de Protección Civil Haití</i> Jose Alcántara, <i>Sub Director de la Defensa Civil, República Dominicana</i> <p>Modera: <i>Representante de ACNUR</i></p>
12:30	Almuerzo
14:00	<p>PANEL 2: EVENTOS HIDRO-METEOROLÓGICOS: LECCIONES APRENDIDAS EN LA RESPUESTA HUMANITARIA Y LA MOVILIDAD HUMANA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huracán Mitch, 1998 Lourdes Ardón, <i>Dirección de Gestión, Preparación y Respuesta de Emergencias, COPECO, Honduras</i> • Huracán Stan 2005 Juana Celestina Sotz, <i>Defensoría de la Mujer Indígena, Guatemala</i> • Respuesta a la Depresión Tropical 12E basada en la experiencia del Huracán Ida en 2009 Jorge Meléndez, <i>Secretario de Asuntos para Vulnerabilidad y Director General de Protección Civil de El Salvador</i> • Estudio de caso: deslizamiento en el Municipio de La Unión, Zacapa, Guatemala Ángela Leal, <i>CONRED Guatemala</i> • Mecanismos de protección temporal en el contexto de desplazamiento por desastres: Caso EEUU. Robin Bronen, <i>Universidad de Alaska Fairbanks</i> <p>Modera: <i>Señora Vanessa Rosales, Presidenta de la Comisión Nacional de Emergencias (CNE)</i></p>
15:15	Pausa de café
15:30	<p>PANEL 3: DESASTRES: EVOLUCIÓN LENTA Y DEGRADACIÓN AMBIENTAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efectos del cambio climático en América Central Ana Lorena Guevara, <i>Viceministra de Ambiente, Republica de Costa Rica</i> • Cambio Climático y Movilidad Humana Koko Warner, <i>United Nations University</i> • Cambio climático, migración y urbanización, Susana Adamo, <i>Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN)</i> • Identidad y territorio: Caso Kuna Heraclio Herrera, <i>Asesor del Congreso General Guna y Consultor ambiental de la Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (ANCON)</i> <p>Modera: <i>Jan Breittling, Head, Department of Environment and Development. University for Peace</i></p>
16:30	Momento de reflexión individual: cuestionario a responder individualmente
17:00	Nombramiento de Comité de Redacción y Cierre del día

MARTES 3 DE DICIEMBRE	
8:30	Introducción al trabajo de grupos nacionales
8:40	Trabajo de grupos nacionales: avances y retos en el tema
10:00	Refrigerio
10:15	Presentación del trabajo de grupos nacionales
11:15	<p>INTRODUCCIÓN Y TRABAJO DE GRUPOS REGIONALES SEGÚN ESPECIALIDAD:</p> <p>GRUPO 1 Preparación y Prevención: prácticas y políticas en preparación a desastres, construcción de resiliencia, y respuesta y manejo de riesgos al desplazamiento.</p> <p>GRUPO 2 Respuesta: prácticas y políticas relacionadas con admisión y normas de trato en el contexto de desplazamiento y migración transfronteriza en situaciones de desastre.</p> <p>GRUPO 3 Protección: instituciones, programas y políticas vinculadas a intereses y derechos de poblaciones desplazadas para moverse con dignidad y en seguridad y en un marco que respeta sus derechos humanos.</p> <p>GRUPO 4 Soluciones duraderas/sostenibles: Planificación estratégica de retorno y soluciones duraderas para personas desplazadas en caso de desastres.</p> <p>GRUPO 5 Coordinación internacional: Trabajo en conjunto entre entes nacionales e internacionales para coordinar el trabajo humanitario sobre desplazamiento en caso de desastres.</p>
12:30	Almuerzo
13:30	Continuación del trabajo de grupos regionales según especialidad
14:30	Presentación de resultados de trabajo de grupos regionales según especialidad
15:00	Pausa de café
15:15	Introducción y trabajo de grupos binacionales: solución de un problema en el contexto del desplazamiento transfronterizo
16:20	Presentación de grupos binacionales
17:20	Cierre del día
MIÉRCOLES 4 DE DICIEMBRE	
08:30	Oportunidades de seguimiento en marco de mecanismos e iniciativas regionales e internacionales (CELAC, SICA, MecReg-SICA, Conferencia Regional Sobre Migraciones, MIAH, OCAM, Red-Lac, etc.)
10:00	Pausa de café
10:30	Presentación del documento borrador elaborado para identificar desafíos del desplazamiento humano en el contexto de los desastres y cambio climático en América Central y una línea de acción vinculada a esta temática.
11:00	Análisis del documento borrador presentado en plenaria y adopción.
12:00	<p>Cierre de la Consulta</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representante del Gobierno de Costa Rica • Representante del CEPREDENAC • Representante de la CNE • Representante del Gobierno Noruego • Representante del Gobierno Suizo • Representante de la Iniciativa Nansen
12:30	Almuerzo

3.2 PARTICIPANT LIST

	Position	Institution / Organization	Contact Info
COLOMBIA			
Christian Visnes	Director de País	NRC- Consejo Noruego para Refugiados	christian.visnes@nrc.org.co
Juan Carlos Moreno Gutiérrez	Asesor	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	juan.moreno@cancilleria.gov.co
Juan Carlos Torres Daza	Subdirección para la Reducción del Riesgo	Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres	juan_karlos29@hotmail.com juan.torres@gestiondelriesgo.gov.co
Leidy Andrea Martínez Gutiérrez	Asesora	Unidad Administrativa Especial Migración Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	leidy.martinez@migracioncolombia.gov.co
COSTA RICA			
Adrián Jiménez Ardón	Asesor de la Directora General	Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería Ministerio de Gobernación	adrianja44@gmail.com
Allan Lavell	Coordinador Programa de Investigación en Desastres y Gestión de Riesgos	Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO)	allanlavell@gmail.com
Alonso Brenes	Investigador	Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO)	albrenet@hotmail.com
Álvaro Paniagua Núñez	Dirección de Protección Especial	Defensoría de los Habitantes de Costa Rica	apaniagua@dhr.go.cr
Ana Lorena Guevara	Vice Ministra	Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía	vicemi@minae.go.cr lquevara@minaet.go.cr
Carlos Vanderlant	Oficial de Salud y migración	Oficina Regional de la Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)	cvanderlant@oim.int
Carolina Molina Barrantes	Área Derechos Humanos y Seguridad Humana	Dirección General de Política Exterior Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto	cmolina.rree@gmail.com cmolina@rree.go.cr
Enrique Castillo Barrantes	Ministro	Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto	ecastillo@rree.go.cr
Gabriela Rodríguez Pizarro	Presidenta	Centro Internacional para las Derechos Humanos de los Migrantes CIDEHUM	cidehum@gmail.com
Gloria Maklouf	Directora	Asociación de Consultores y Asesores Internacionales (ACAI)	gmaklouf@acai.cr
Jan Breitting	Profesor Medio Ambiente	University for Peace, United Nations	jbreitlin@upaz.org
Juan C. Méndez	Relaciones Internacionales y Cooperación y Punto Focal Iniciativa Nansen	Comisión Nacional de Prevención de Riesgos y Atención de Emergencias (CNE)	jcmendez@cne.go.cr
Kathya Rodríguez	Directora General	Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería Ministerio de Gobernación	krodriguez@migracion.go.cr
Lidier Esquivel	Jefe de Investigación y Análisis de Riesgo	Comisión Nacional de Prevención de Riesgos y Atención de Emergencias (CNE)	lesquivel@cne.go.cr
Linyi Baidal	Directora General Alterna	Dirección General de Política Exterior Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto	linyi.baidal@gmail.com
Luis Diego Castro	Director	Consejo Nacional de la Cruz Roja	luis.castro@cruzroja.org.cr
Luis Diego Obando	Oficial Legal	Unidad Legal. Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados	OBANDO@unhcr.org
Magda Rojas	Área de Ambiente	Dirección General de Política Exterior Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto	magdarojas.cr@gmail.com
Marco Saborio Mesén	Jefe de Relaciones Internacionales y Cooperación y Representante Alterno ante CEPREDENAC.	Comisión Nacional de Prevención de Riesgos y Atención de Emergencias (CNE)	msaborio@cne.go.cr
Maribel Muñoz	Asistente técnica	Secretaría Técnica de la Conferencia Regional sobre Migración (CRM)	mmunozc@iom.int
Mónica Fallas Alpízar	Monitoreo & Evaluación de Proyectos	Protecting Through Education (RET)	costarica-asistcoord@theret.org
Natalia Arce Camiade	Asistente de la Dirección Ejecutiva	Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos (IIDH)	narce@iidh.ed.cr
Renán Rodas	Especialista TIC	Secretaría Técnica de la Conferencia Regional sobre Migración (CRM)	rrodas@iom.int
Ronald Villalobos	ESIME	Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería Ministerio de Gobernación	rvillalobo@migracion.go.cr
Sharon Santos	Coordinadora	Centro Internacional para las Derechos Humanos de los Migrantes CIDEHUM	cidelin@gmail.com

Tanya Chapuisat	Representante de país	UNICEF	tchapuisat@unicef.org
Vanessa Rosales Ardón	Presidenta	Comisión Nacional de Prevención de Riesgos y Atención de Emergencias (CNE)	vrosales@cne.go.cr
BELICE			
Edgar Cano	Part Commander, Immigration Officer III	Dirección de Migración de Belice	edgar.cano@immigration.gov.bz
REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA			
José Alcántara	Sub Director de la Defensa Civil, República Dominicana	Defensa Civil de la República Dominicana	josealcantara77@hotmail.com
Dominga Polanco	Directora de Protección Ambiental	Viceministerio de Gestión Ambiental Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales	dominga.polanco@ambiente.gob.do
EL SALVADOR			
Aida Zeledón	Jefa Jurídica Enlace Nacional CEPREDENAC	Dirección General de Protección Civil	aidazeledon@gmail.com
Celina Kattan	Directora General del Observatorio Ambiental	Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales	ckattan@marn.gob.sv
Damaris Mercedes Guardado	Gerente de Proyectos	Asociación PRO-VIDA	gestionprovida@gmail.com
Fidel Antonio Valencia	Coordinador de la Unidad de Planificación	Dirección General de Protección Civil	favr2007@hotmail.com
Jaime Rivas	Profesor-investigador Departamento de Sociología y Ciencias Políticas	Universidad Centroamericana "José Simeón Cañas" Red Jesuita con Migrantes en Centroamérica	jrrivas@uca.edu.sv
Jorge Meléndez	Secretario para Asuntos de Vulnerabilidad y Director General de Protección Civil	Dirección General de Protección Civil	jonasmelendez@gmail.com
Luis Edgardo Colorado Lainez	Presidente	Cruz Verde Salvadoreña	luislainez@hotmail.com Luis.lainez@cruzverdesalvadorena.org
Miguel Gonzalo Salazar Osegueda	Director de Asuntos Ambientales	Dirección General de Desarrollo Social Integral Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto	msalazar@rree.gob.sv g2osegueda@gmail.com
Patricia Fuentes de Zetino	Arquitecta y Maestra en Desarrollo Local Departamento Organización del Espacio	Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas	pfuentes@uca.edu.sv
Rosa Guillermina Sandoval	Asesora Jurídica	Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos	rosasandoval48@hotmail.com
Silvia María Beatriz Campos	Asesora Jurídica	Colaboradora Procuraduría Adjunta de Derechos Civiles e Individuales Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos	camposcevallos@gmail.com
Jorge Aguilar Merino		APRODEHNI	jorgemerino71@gmail.com
GUATEMALA			
Alfredo Antonio Pineda Vásquez	Coordinador de la Unidad de Desconcentración y Descentralización de la Gestión Ambiental	Dirección General de Coordinación Nacional Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales	aapineda@marn.gob.gt
Amilkar Vásquez	Asesor	PMH-CEG	movhuceq@yahoo.com
Carlos Alberto Pac López	Sub-interventor	Dirección General de Migración	cpac@migracion.gob.gt direccionadjunta@migracion.gob.gt
Claudia Flores de Aldana	Subdirectora de Cooperación Internacional	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	cflores@minex.gob.gt cooperaciones@minex.gob.gt
Elvira Carolina Gutiérrez Palacios	Coordinadora	RMMSy M	elvinitag@yahoo.es
Ericka Lucero del Aguila	Asesora Unidad de Cambio Climático	Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales	elucero@marn.gob.gt
Fabiola Flores	Directora Regional	Dirección Regional América Latina y El Caribe American Friends Service Committee	fflores@afsc.org
Fanny Polanía Molina	Coordinadora Programa Programa de Desarraigo, Desplazamiento y Migración Forzada	Consejería en Proyectos PCS-CAMEX	fpolania@pcslatin.org

Héctor López	Coordinador Proyecto Migración	Sociedad Nacional de Cruz Roja Guatemala	hector.lopez@cruzroja.gt hectorher40@gmail.com
Horacio Marcel Arévalo Quinteros	Coordinador Área Estudios de pobreza y migración	Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO)	marevalo@flacso.edu.gt
Irene Palma	Directora Ejecutiva	Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Sociales y Desarrollo (INCEDES)	irenepalmacalderon@gmail.com
Jorge Daniel Lorenzana García	Delegado	Mesa Nacional Para las Migraciones en Guatemala (MENAMIG)	migrantesalud@gmail.com comunicacion@menamig.org
Juana Celestina Sotz Chex	Directora Ejecutiva	Defensoría de la Mujer Indígena	direccionejecutiva@demi.gob.gt sotzi@yahoo.com
Kelly Argueta	Subdirectora del Sistema de Enlaces Interinstitucionales	Coordinadora para la Reducción de los Desastres (CONRED)	kargueta@conred.org.gt kelly-argueta@hotmail.com
Mara Olga Rodríguez	Técnica en Proyectos	Fundación Guatemala	maitero@yahoo.com mararodbal@hotmail.com
María Ángela Leal Pineda	Directora Dirección de Gestión Integral de Riesgo	Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducción de Desastres (CONRED)	aleal@conred.org.gt
Raúl Salguero	Coordinador	Secretaría General del Consejo Superior Universitario Centroamericano (CSUCA)	rasg2032@yahoo.es rsalguero@csuca.org
Ricardo Sulugui Juracan	Presidente y Representante Legal	Defensoría Maya	ricardo.solugui@yahoo.es
HAÍTÍ			
Joseph Felix	Consultor	Dirección de Protección Civil de Haití	joefelix2004@yahoo.com
Junior Remy	Encargado de Asuntos Humanitarios	Oficina de las Naciones para Asuntos Humanitarios – OCHA-	mauvaisr@un.org remy_mauvais@yahoo.fr
Rafaelle Robelin	Consultora	Organización Internacional para las Migraciones – OIM-	rrobelin@iom.int
Sony Cadet	Chief Service	Dirección de Protección Civil Ministerio del Interior	sonybelanfom2003@yahoo.fr
HONDURAS			
Carmen Geraldina Saldoval Velasquez	Directora Cooperación Internacional	Comisión Permanente de Contingencias (COPECO)	geral_s42@hotmail.com
Cinthy Barahona	Encargada de Asuntos Internacionales	Dirección de Asuntos Especiales Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores	directorasuntosespeciales@gmail.com
Eva Natalia Lozano Vivas	Coordinadora Proyectos Área de defensoría de derechos humanos	Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CIPRODEH)	lozano.naty@gmail.com
Fredy Fernández	Analista de Cooperación Internacional	Dirección de Gestión y Cooperación Internacional Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores	fredyfernandez84@gmail.com
José Edgardo Colíndres Martínez	Área de defensoría de derechos humanos	Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CIPRODEH)	edgarcol2002@yahoo.com.mx
José Lenin O'connor Cano	Dirección de Cooperación Externa	Secretaría de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente	cooperacionserna@gmail.com
Lourdes Ardon	Trabajadora Humanitaria Coordinadora de Albergues Miembro de equipo UNDAC Dirección de Gestión Preparación y Respuesta de Emergencia	Comisión Permanente de Contingencias (COPECO)	lourdesardon@hotmail.com
Milagro Valiente	Presidenta	Consejo de Cruz Roja Hondureña en el Departamento de Choluteca	milagro.valiente@cruzroja.org.hn
Reina Lizzeth Guevara Peña	Oficial de Cooperación	Comisión Permanente de Contingencias (COPECO)	lizzeth71@hotmail.com
Sandra Santos	Analista de Política Bilateral	Dirección de Política Exterior Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores	yami_cruz2012@yahoo.com
MÉXICO			
Anne Lice Hernández Alba	Coordinadora de Apoyos y Enlace Interinstitucional de la Coordinación Nacional de Protección Civil	Secretaría de Gobernación CGPC/SEGOB	ahernandez@segog.go.mx
Erasm Lara Cabrera	Director General Adjunto de Casos, Democracia y Derechos Humanos	Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores	elara@sre.gob.mx
José Eduardo Rojo Oropeza	Director de Relaciones Internacionales e Interinstitucionales	Unidad de Política Migratoria-SPMAR Secretaría de Gobernación	rojo@segob.gob.mx

Marcos Gómez Lecuona	Dirección General de Organismos y Mecanismos Regionales Americanos	Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores	mgomez@sre.gob.mx
Norma Araceli Díaz Godínez	Directora de Migración y Refugio	Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores	ndiaz@sre.gob.mx
Rafael Barceló	Asuntos Políticos	Embajada de México en Costa Rica	rbarcelo@sre.gob.mx
NICARAGUA			
Xochilt Noelia Cortes Stubbart	Directora Planificación	Secretaría Ejecutiva del Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación y Atención de Desastres SE-SINAPRED	xcortez@sinapred.gob.ni
Guadalupe Esther Rodríguez Gaitán	Miembro de la Comisión de Animación de la MNGR	Centro de investigaciones y Estudios de la Salud- Escuela de Salud Pública de Nicaragua- CIES-UNAN Mesa Nacional para la Gestión de Riesgo - Nicaragua (MNGR)	cedoc@cies.edu.ni dhma365@gmail.com
Miguel Ángel Ortiz González	Teniente	Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería	mortez@migob.gob.ni
Gregorio Vásquez Gálvez	Subdirector	Universidad Centroamericana (UCA) Servicio Jesuita para Migrantes (SJM) Nicaragua	goyovas@yahoo.com goyovas@ns.uca.edu.ni gregorio.sjmnicaragua@gmail.com
PANAMÁ			
Edwin Pinzón	Jefe Departamento de Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	epinzon@mire.gob.pa
Helvecia Bonilla	Jefa Depto. Emergencia y Riesgos Ambientales	Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente	hbonilla@anam.gob.pa
Alina Edaena Mariscal Carrasquilla	Sub Comisionada	Servicio Nacional de Migración	alinamrsc103@gmail.com
Mayra Silvera	Directora	Dirección Nacional de ONPAR-Ministerio de Gobierno	msilvera@mingob.gob.pa
Emily Gisella Bravo	Dirección General	Autoridad Nacional de Aduanas	Emily.Bravo@ana.gob.pa
José Encarnación Valencia Hernández	Centro de Operaciones de Emergencias	Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil SINAPROC	jvalenciah12@hotmail.com
Susana Zuleika Díaz	Asesora Legal	Dirección Nacional de ONPAR-Ministerio de Gobierno	susanadiaz79@hotmail.com
Heracio Herrera	Miembro del Pueblo Guna. Técnico asesor en temas ambientales del Congreso General Guna	Consultor ambiental en la Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (ANCON)	heracioherrera@gmail.com
Enrique Torrella Raymond	Coordinador País	NRC-Consejo Noruego para Refugiados	enrique.torrella@nrc.org.co
ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES / INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS			
Julie Hoare	Coordinator - Strategic Relations and Cooperation Unit	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Americas zone office	julie.hoare@ifrc.org
Carlos Cruz	Oficial de Emergencias Regional EPR Projects Coordinator Disaster Management Team Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean / Panama	PMA / UN World Food Programme (WFP)	carlos.cruz@wfp.org
Fabrizio Poretti	Director Residente Adjunto/ Responsable para ayuda humanitaria	Oficina de Cooperación Suiza en América Central (COSUDE)	fabrizio.poretti@eda.admin.ch
Justin Ginnetti	Senior Advisor, Research Methodologies and Evidence	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) Norwegian Refugee Council	justin.ginnetti@nrc.no
Alfredo Zamudio	Director	Observatorio de Desplazamiento Interno (IDMC) Norwegian Refugee Council	Alfredo.Zamudio@nrc.no
Christopher Lavell	Investigador ambiental	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)	cmlavell@gmail.com
Koko Warner	Section Head Environmental Migration, Social Resilience, and Adaptation	Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) United Nations University	warner@ehs.unu.edu
Pilar Duch	Experta en Protección	OXFAM Regional Humanitarian Manager & Security Focal Point, OGB Latin America and the Caribbean	pduch@OxfamIntermon.org
Darío Álvarez	Regional Disaster and Response Advisor	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) / Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC)	alvarez6@un.org

Valerie Julliand	Coordinadora Residente del Sistema de Naciones Unidas en Guatemala	Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo en Guatemala (PNUD)	valerie.julliand@one.un.org
Alice Thomas	Refugee Internacional	Program Manager	alice@refintl.org
Noel Barillas	Secretario Ejecutivo a.i	Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres Naturales en América Central (CEPRENAC)	nbarillas@sica.int
Victor Ramirez	Gerente de Cooperación y Proyectos	Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres Naturales en América Central (CEPRENAC)	vramirez@sica.int
Robert Paiva	Director Regional para América Central, México y Norteamérica	Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)	rpaiva@iom.int
José Samaniego	Jefe Adjunto	Oficina Regional del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR)	samanieg@unhcr.org
Luis Diego Obando	Asesor Legal	Unidad Legal Regional Oficina Regional del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR)	OBANDO@unhcr.org
CENTROS DE INVESTIGACIÓN / RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS			
Susana Adamo	Associate Research Scientist	Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) Columbia University	sadamo@ciesin.columbia.edu
Robin Bronin	Executive Director	Alaska Institute for Justice Alaska University	robin.bronen@akimmigrationjustice.org
Anthony Oliver- Smith	Professor Emeritus	University of Florida	aros@ufl.edu
Patricia Fagen	Department of Anthropology Académica	Georgetown University	pwf@georgetown.edu
CUERPO DIPLOMÁTICO / DIPLOMATS			
Jan Gerhard Lassen	Embajador de Noruega Concurrente para Costa Rica y Guatemala	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Noruega	jan.gerhard.lassen@mfa.no
Hilde Salvesen	Senior Adviser	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Noruega	Hilde.Salvesen@mfa.no
Isabelle Gómez Truedsson	Diplomatic Adviser	Diplomatic Adviser Directorate of Political Affairs DP Human Security Division: Peace, Human Rights, Humanitarian Policy, Migration Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Suiza	isabelle.gomeztruedsson@eda.admin.ch
Yasmine Chatila Zwahlen	Embajadora de Suiza en Costa Rica	Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	yasmine.chatila@eda.admin.ch
OTROS PARTICIPANTES / OTHER PARTICIPANTS			
Anna Tiraa	Directora Cambio Climático	Climate Change Cook Islands Office of the Prime Minister	ana.tiraa@cookislands.gov.ck
Walter Kaeli	Enviado Especial de la Presidencia de la Iniciativa Nansen	Nansen Initiative	kaelin@nanseninitiative.org
Atle Solberg	Jefe del Secretariado de la Iniciativa Nansen	Nansen Initiative	solberg@nanseninitiative.org
Hannah Estwisle Chapuisat	Research and Partnerships Officer	Nansen Initiative	entwisle@hanseninitiative.org

DISASTERS
CLIMATE CHANGE AND
DISPLACEMENT



**EVIDENCE
FOR ACTION**

This is a multi-partner project funded by the European Commission (EC) whose overall aim is to address a legal gap regarding cross-border displacement in the context of disasters. The project brings together the expertise of three distinct partners (UNHCR, NRC/IDMC and the Nansen Initiative) seeking to:

- 1 › **increase the understanding** of States and relevant actors in the international community about displacement related to disasters and climate change;
- 2 › **equip them to plan for and manage** internal relocations of populations in a protection sensitive manner; and
- 3 › **provide States and other relevant actors tools and guidance** to protect persons who cross international borders owing to disasters, including those linked to climate change.

THE
NANSEN
INITIATIVE

DISASTER-INDUCED CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT

Nansen Initiative Secretariat

International Environment House 2,
7-9, Chemin de Balexert, 1219 Chatelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
Phone: +41 22 917 8205
info@nanseninitiative.org
www.nanseninitiative.org