



**GP20 Steering Group Meeting**  
**Monday 9 March 2020, 15:00-17:30**  
**UN Palais des Nations, Room XXVII, Geneva**

***Internal Displacement in the Context of Disasters and the Adverse Effects of  
Climate Change: Prevention, Protection and Solutions***

**SUMMARY**

This sixth meeting of the GP20 Steering Group focused on internal displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change. The aim of this meeting was to learn from the experiences of governments and others who have taken important steps to prevent, address and resolve internal disaster displacement, discuss the relevance of the four GP20 priorities in the [GP20 Plan of Action](#) in disaster and climate change contexts, discuss key challenges and gaps in current responses, and formulate new ideas and recommendations that can inform the deliberations of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

**Key messages**

Drawing on experiences from Ethiopia, Fiji, Indonesia and Mongolia, the following key messages emerged from the discussion on internal displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change.

1. **Addressing displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change requires a collaborative, integrated and long-term project approach** across humanitarian, development, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actors. A solutions-oriented approach is required from the preparedness stage. Opportunities for strengthening partnerships, deployment of knowledge and generating a more holistic approach across disaster and conflict contexts also need to be identified and seized.
2. **Community participation in disaster risk reduction and response is critical** and should include women, older persons, children and youth and the disabled. Community-generated and -led disaster preparedness, early warning and response initiatives facilitated and supported by the government, such as the Sister Village Programme in Indonesia, show particular promise when relocation is planned to a village with similar background and livelihoods. Working with both displaced or at-risk and host communities, losses are minimized, and there is minimal disruption to access to livelihoods, land, shelter and services.
3. **A whole of government approach is essential for preventing and addressing displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change.** Decentralized multi-agency disaster risk governance has worked well in Ethiopia with district-level risk profiles calling for differentiated interventions. Domestic mobilization of resources and dedicated budget lines for emergency aid for drought-affected communities helped build resilience and address root causes of displacement. Experience from Fiji and Indonesia also shows that local-level contingency plans, enforcement of building codes and a coordinated response to displacement risk and impacts are

also essential. At the same time, additional resources are required at the national level with the involvement of all relevant Ministries to address and resolve internal disaster displacement.

4. **National disaster risk reduction strategies should integrate disaster displacement risk.** Displacement may be the single most significant ramification of disasters, yet less than half of the UN Member States that adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 have national disaster risk reduction strategies. While most of these strategies make some reference to human mobility issues, only half integrate displacement and migration as a consequence of and/or driver of vulnerability and disaster risk.<sup>1</sup> This is despite the fact that Member States committed to develop or revise national and local disaster risk reduction strategies with measures to reduce the risk of disaster displacement under the Sendai Framework.
5. **Innovative financing methods such as forecast-based financing and national trust funds can help communities at risk adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and avoid displacement, or help them to move out of harm's way through planned relocation.** Forecast-based cash assistance to herder communities at risk of displacement in Mongolia shows it is possible to prevent the conditions that lead to displacement. After relocating two communities facing sea-level rise and learning the financial cost of planned relocations, Fiji established the national Climate Change and Relocation Trust Fund to finance future planned relocations. Effective use of anticipatory financing depends on reliable forecasts of extreme weather events.
6. **Meteorological, climate and other forms of weather-related data can be used more effectively for risk modelling and to anticipate and manage disaster displacement risk.** The work of meteorological institutes is critical for reliable weather forecasts that can be used to anticipate risk and mitigate displacement. Indonesia's increased investments to the World Meteorological Organization demonstrate the importance of this data for the government.
7. **Efforts must be scaled-up to address data and evidence gaps regarding disaster displacement, including on protection needs of the displaced.** There is no global stock data of the number of people internally displaced by disasters, and data is even more scarce and unreliable in the context of slow-onset events and processes, such as those linked to the adverse effects of climate change. Data collected by humanitarian, development, disaster risk reduction and climate change actors often does 'not speak to each other's, and is an obstacle to a more effective response to internal disaster displacement.

## **Country approaches to internal displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change**

### **Indonesia: Sister Village Programme**

**Dr. Suprayoga Hadi, Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas), Indonesia**

Mount Merapi is Indonesia's most active volcano and poses a permanent threat to the surrounding communities, erupting every two to three years. To increase the preparedness of communities at risk of displacement by volcanic eruptions, the Sister Village Programme pairs villages located in the most hazardous areas close to the volcano with other villages in safer areas around 15 km away with whom they have cultural links. Over 55,000 people in 21 villages at risk of displacement have been twinned with 48 receiving villages. Evacuees can access land, shelter, schools and health care and receive updated identification cards. A government fund is made available in the receiving village for community-based development and disaster risk reduction measures. Eight years after their evacuation, some IDPs have opted not to return since they feel accepted in the supporting village.

Communities at risk of displacement initiated the programme and the government facilitated the twinning process. This included mapping village resources and capacities, formalizing the process through administrative agreements, standard operating procedures and regulations, development of community action plans, and creation of village preparedness teams in both the high-risk and receiving

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<sup>1</sup> Platform on Disaster Displacement, October 2018, Mapping the Baseline: - To What Extent Are Displacement and Other Forms of Human Mobility Integrated in National and Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies?, p. 11, available at: <https://disasterdisplacement.org/portfolio-item/drrmapping>

villages. An essential component is the Village Information System, a database of persons and their assets who will evacuate to enable faster assistance during the crisis. A detailed evacuation plan ensures all villagers are evacuated safely and quickly with their livestock, and that land and shelter is available for evacuees and their cattle upon arrival. Other aspects include disaster risk reduction training, evacuation simulation drills, and construction of infrastructure such as roads and reception facilities.

Several factors have been important to the success of the programme:

1. The evacuated community can practice their culture and livelihood in the receiving community, and their livelihood assets – in this case livestock- were transported with them.
2. The receiving village had land for the evacuees and their livestock.
3. The receiving village economy has improved.
4. Technical assistance allowed the government to establish a reliable data system on the villages and their residents.
5. Village funds for community-based development and disaster risk reduction initiatives are an incentive for the receiving community to accept evacuees.

### **Ethiopia: Risk management and response to internal displacement**

**Mr. Samuel Alemayehu, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva**

Large-scale internal displacement is a relatively recent phenomenon in Ethiopia. While in 2012, there were 400,000 internally displaced people in the country, in 2018 there were an estimated 2.9 million new internal displacements. Most were caused by inter-communal conflict, and around 30 per cent were related to disasters and the adverse effects of climate change such as flash floods, landslides and drought. The drivers of displacement inter-relate as increasing competition for natural resources was one factor that led to the inter-communal clashes. The El Nino phenomenon has also negatively impacted the food security of seven million people in the country annually for the past seven years as many practice rain-based agriculture as a livelihood. Internal displacement caused by conflict since 2016 exposed normative and institutional gaps as well as weak response coordination mechanisms.

Ethiopia has undertaken numerous efforts to reduce the risk of and address internal displacement caused by conflict, disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, including:

#### *Shift from crisis management to risk management in 2013 by amending the 2008 National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management to the National Disaster Risk Management Policy*

The 2013 policy instills a whole of government approach by tasking authorities at the district, regional and federal level and establishing a Disaster Risk Management and Preparedness Committee reporting to the Prime Minister's Office. Three main elements of policy implementation are:

1. Development of disaster risk profiles for each district: intervention models in districts differ based on disaster risk profiles, which are complete for 670 districts
2. Early warning system: includes risk assessments and alerts for slow-onset disaster situations
3. Prevention of the conditions that lead to displacement: efforts with the World Bank designed to ensure food security, soil restoration and conservation, and resilience building in areas of recurrent drought

Additional important components of policy implementation include multi-stakeholder disaster response coordination at all levels by a Disaster Risk Management technical working group, with government bodies, UN agencies and NGOs, capacity building, and integration of disaster risk reduction into the National Development Plan.

#### *Collaborative solutions-oriented approach to addressing internal displacement caused by inter-communal clashes in 2016*

In the absence of a dedicated framework on internal displacement, the government activated disaster risk management structures as a response mechanism to conflict displacement that began in 2016. There was a strong focus on the early adoption of a solutions-oriented approach by embracing the

New Way of Working and rolling out a strategic plan with humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions in parallel at the federal and local levels, including community-led peacebuilding initiatives. The government established a national working group on durable solutions, scaling up from a group at the regional level, and a working group to resolve housing, land and property issues was also established.

Since 2018, an estimated two million internally displaced people have returned to their places of origin as part of a three-phase return plan. The focus on return was meant to allow IDPs to resume their agricultural livelihoods. As the economy is agriculture-based, this has helped prevent massive food insecurity. The government has led efforts to mobilize and allocate resources to addressing internal displacement, is using customary law and community-centered peacebuilding to resolve community conflicts, and is developing a framework on internal displacement in line with recent ratification of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention). Coordination among humanitarian and development actors can be improved as can the speed and adequacy of development support, the development of needs-based strategies, ensuring the government has a leadership role, and the capacity of some authorities.

**Mongolia: financing to strengthen resilience of communities at risk of displacement**  
**Ms. Tiziana Bonzon, Migration and Displacement Global Lead, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva**

Dzud is a Mongolian term for a climatic phenomenon of severe drought followed by extreme cold. The Dzud has become more recurrent and extreme because of the adverse effects of climate change. In the past, Dzud would happen every four to five years allowing communities to recover and rebuild stocks of hay and fodder for their livestock, which are the only source of food, transport and income for a quarter of the population. Now, Dzuds occur nearly annually and half of the country is at risk of being affected, especially herding communities. Those affected often resort to negative coping measures, including taking loans that they cannot pay back, eating less and not sending their kids to school. Depleted of resources, some are obliged to move to the city where they face harsh living conditions, marginalization and associations with theft and alcoholism. As such, the Dzud and its effects on communities is a driver of rural to urban displacement.

To support the herders well before the loss of their livestock, a Dzud risk map was developed around 14 indicators derived from weather forecast data. Recipients of funding were identified and unconditional cash assistance was released and transferred to their bank accounts when weather-related indicators reached the trigger point. Animal care kits were also distributed with related training and workshops. All of this was captured in an Early Action Protocol, which is activated together with the release of 250,000 CHF maximum from the Disaster Risk Emergency Fund (DREF). This fund is normally used when a crisis is imminent or just happened, and now a maximum of 250,000 CHF can be allocated to anticipatory actions.

The multi-stakeholder approach has been essential to forecast-based action in Mongolia. Developing the Dzud risk map requires scientific knowledge and local historical understanding of weather patterns and community vulnerability, which the national meteorological and environmental agency and research institute and local partners contributed. Local municipalities provided beneficiary data and assisted with selection, the local Khan Bank helped with cash flow and the Red Cross Climate Centre in the Netherlands helped develop the Early Action Protocol and identify the trigger point. Community participation is also essential. IFRC and other agencies providing forecast-based financing such as OCHA, FAO and WFP are combining efforts and currently have Early Action Protocols in 60 countries.

Lessons learned include:

1. Forecast-based action helps us better understand displacement drivers since developing the Early Action Protocol requires data collection on underlying socio-economic issues
2. Displacement is not an inevitable consequence of disasters; it can be avoided by addressing the conditions that lead to displacement through finance and resilience building measures

3. National resilience, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies do not systematically include displacement as a specific risk, though understanding the specific vulnerabilities of all affected communities is required for an impartial approach
4. Need to scale up new financing schemes such as Forecast-based Financing as early action measures can reduce displacement risk

#### **Meeting participants**

- **Member states:** Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Canada, Colombia, European Union, Fiji, France, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Norway, Philippines, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United States of America.
- **United Nations:** UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, UN Development Programme, Global Protection Cluster.
- **Academia:** Columbia University's Center for International Earth Science Information Network, Copenhagen University's Centre for International law, Conflict and Crisis, Oxford University, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impacts Research, University of Bern's World Trade Institute.
- **International Organizations:** CARE International, Christian Aid, Danish Refugee Council, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, International Council of Voluntary Agencies, Interaction, International Organisation for Least Developed Countries, the Joint IDP Profiling Service, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, World Bank
- **Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement:** the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross.