

Promoting a Regional Approach to the Challenges of Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters and the Adverse Effects of Climate Change in the Pacific

Regional Consultation in Nadi, Fiji, 30 November – 2 December 2022

Chair's Summary

1. The Government of Fiji convened the Regional Consultation on “Promoting a Regional Approach to the Challenges of Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters and the Adverse Effects of Climate Change in the Pacific” in Nadi, Fiji, from 30 November – 2 December 2022 in partnership with the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). It was supported with funding from the European Union and the Government of Germany.
2. The Consultation was attended by more than 70 participants including representatives from Pacific Island Countries (PICs), PDD Steering Group members, regional and international organizations, partners of the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS), the Pacific Islands Forum, UN agencies, civil society and academia. Participation from the Pacific included Australia, the Cook Islands, the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, New Zealand, Tonga, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu, and the host country Fiji.
3. The Consultation involved discussions on lessons learned and effective practices on averting, minimizing and addressing displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, and to support ongoing efforts to develop national and regional approaches to addressing challenges related to displacement in the context of climate change in the Pacific.
4. Participants visited a planned relocation site in Tukuraki in the highlands of Ba province, where a community displaced by a landslide found new homes. The visit provided an opportunity to learn about the complexities of planned relocation and internal displacement and ways to address them through joint and sustainable action of the government, affected communities and civil society.
5. The meeting was opened on 1 December 2022 in an official welcome session by the Permanent Secretary for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management of Fiji. In her welcome remarks, the Permanent Secretary

acknowledged the role of the PDD and other partners supporting the work on disaster displacement in the Pacific. She also handed over the Chairmanship of the PDD to the European Union. Fiji was chair of the PDD Steering Group from January 2021 to June 2022, while the EU chairs the PDD from July 2022 to December 2023. In his remarks, the EU Representative described how the EU will build on the achievements made under the Fijian Chairmanship of the PDD and presented the EU's priorities as the incoming Chair.

6. The Consultation provided participating countries the opportunity to share experiences and learn from each other with regard to addressing the challenges of human mobility in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change (displacement, migration and planned relocation) and emphasized the importance of evidence and scientific data when planning and implementing relevant policies and action.
7. Participants noted lessons learned, shared effective practices and presented tools and outputs from the Pacific Response to Disaster Displacement (PRDD) project which officially concludes in December 2022. Project partners including IDMC, PDD, IOM, SPC and the Technical Working Group on Human Mobility under the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) presented data, reports and other outcomes of the project.
8. Participants noted the continued consultations among PICs and other stakeholders in their efforts at developing a robust and practical draft regional framework on climate mobility in the Pacific. The framework will provide guidance to Member States to address the key issues emerging in the context of climate change, disasters and related mobility.
9. The meeting reflected on the relevance of displacement and human mobility in the context of ongoing global policy discussions on climate change adaptation and loss and damage, in particular under the UNFCCC, with a focus on outcomes and decisions of COP27 and preparing for COP28. In light of recent decisions taken on loss and damage, including funding, and the operationalization of the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage under the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage at COP27, participants discussed national and local approaches towards averting, minimizing and addressing the implications of loss and damage including displacement on the countries in the region.

10. In working groups, participants got together to discuss the harmonization of approaches on humanitarian entry and stay in the context of disasters and climate change; to discuss lessons learned and next steps of the PRDD Project; to reflect on outcomes of COP27 and discuss elements for key messages for COP28 and to prepare input to the Sendai Framework Midterm Review.
11. Participants also proposed recommendations from the panel discussions, working groups and presentations of national and regional approaches to the challenges of human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change. These include :
 - a. Displacement and relocation as a last resort - Displacement and relocation are a complex dilemma for Pacific communities. Participants re-emphasized that planned relocation can only be a measure of last resort and needs to happen after thorough consultation with disaster and displacement affected communities, both those displaced and those hosting.
 - b. Continued engagement at the global stage - Building on the achievements of COP27, the voices of small island developing states and the Pacific need to continue to be heard and positioned in the climate change negotiations, at COP28 and beyond, continuing to advocate for bolder steps towards reaching the 1.5 degree goal and ensuring robust and sustainable funding for adaptation and loss and damage.
 - c. Coherent policies - Any successor to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction will need to address displacement in coherence with other policy agendas and ensure that disaster risk reduction places human mobility within its scope of action. This is essential for securing a future for the Pacific youth who wish to live in their ancestral homes and not be forced to relocate or move.
 - d. Human mobility - Human mobility in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change encompasses migration, displacement and planned relocation. Both in the formulation of policy frameworks and for data gathering, the use of terminology and the distinctions between these different forms and their particular protection and assistance needs have to be clear-cut and consistent.

- e. Contextualized solutions - Recognizing the large potential to learn from experiences and practices in other world regions, participants emphasized the importance of culture, spiritual beliefs and practices that make the Pacific and its subregions unique. Solutions must be tailored to local context.
- f. Human-rights based approach - An inclusive and human rights based whole-of-society approach must be at the core of any and all discussions and decisions about human mobility in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, including not only governments but community representatives such as civil society, youth, faith-based organizations and other actors. SOPs and existing guidelines should be reviewed regularly with this in mind and supported by the necessary funding for implementation.
- g. Dedicated capacities and resources - Decisions to move persons away from their traditional land and homes are complex and touch on many issues including land rights, mental health, livelihoods, access to basic services and community structures. They need to be based on sound data. Capacities and resources need to be made available and strengthened to support governments and other stakeholders collect, analyze and use data as basis for policy formulation and implementation.
- h. Harmonization of approaches - Building on the experiences of COVID-19, there is an opportunity to continue moving towards harmonization of approaches on humanitarian entry and stay in the context of disasters and climate change building on existing laws, practices and cultural traditions.
- i. Building on existing initiatives through regular consultation - It will be important to build on the outcomes of the initiatives discussed at this consultation to ensure that initial interventions on policy and capacity building are built upon and scaled up. Governments, data actors and communities need to be enabled, resourced and capacitated to work together in order to make a difference for persons displaced in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change. There is a need to establish a consultative mechanism to further the discussions from this consultation at the regional level.

12. The Pacific, like no other region in the world, needs to continue to make itself heard in international fora and processes to ensure that the largest number possible of its inhabitants can remain living in the places where they were born and have cultural and spiritual ties as well as their livelihoods.

International and regional organizations can play important roles as partners for governments and civil society actors, supporting whole-of-society approaches that implement the national and local priorities defined through consultation with displacement affected communities.

Loss and damage including displacement are happening today and require greater recognition and support from the international community while the Pacific region at the same time can offer a lot of practices and experiences to share with other regions facing the challenges of displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change.

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