



PLATFORM  
ON DISASTER  
DISPLACEMENT  
FOLLOW-UP TO THE NANSEN INITIATIVE

# INFORMATION BRIEF

## The Platform on Disaster Displacement and Planned Relocation

November 2024







📷 Philippine Red Cross has distributed relief to the residents on Brgy Bitag, Burgos, Siargao, 2021. © IFRC/Alecs Ongcal

## INTRODUCTION

Displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, disasters caused by natural hazards, and environmental degradation is a reality today and will continue to be a growing global concern. When movement of at-risk communities is unavoidable, policy options include planned relocation to move people away from hazardous areas to safer areas before or after a disaster occurs.

While the term ‘planned relocation’ is not defined under international law, the [Nansen Initiative Agenda](#) for the Protection of Cross-Border Disaster-Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change (Protection Agenda) understands planned relocation as a

“ [...] planned process in which persons or groups of persons move or are assisted to move away from their homes or places of temporary residence, are settled in a new location, and provided with the conditions for rebuilding their lives. Planned relocation can be voluntary or involuntary, and usually takes place within the country, but may, in very exceptional cases, also occur across State borders.”

Planned relocation is increasingly discussed at the global, regional and national level, yet a number of conceptual and knowledge gaps remain. For example, its relationship with migration and displacement, as well as evacuation or resettlement, is often not clearly understood. Likewise, it remains unclear whether planned relocation constitutes a form of adaptation, a disaster risk reduction strategy and/or a form of loss and damage.

This information brief compiles information regarding frameworks, processes and guidance relevant to planned relocation that exist at the global, regional and national level. It also provides an overview of the PDD’s engagement on planned relocation from 2016-2024.

# PLANNED RELOCATION IN INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS, PROCESSES AND GUIDANCE

Since 2010, the topic of planned relocation in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change has been integrated into several international frameworks, processes and guidance.

2010

The [Cancun Adaptation Framework](#) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) called on Parties to undertake “measures to enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation with regard to climate change induced displacement, migration and *planned relocation*, where appropriate, at the national, regional and international levels.”

2015

A key document titled “[Guidance on Protecting People from Disasters and Environmental Change through Planned Relocation](#)” was produced by the Brookings Institution, Georgetown University and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030](#) recognized the importance of formulating policies at the local and national level “aimed at addressing the issues of prevention or *relocation*, where possible, of human settlements in disaster risk-prone zones, subject to national law and legal systems.”

The [Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda](#) recognized the relevance of “*planned relocation* with respect for people’s rights” as a measure to manage disaster displacement risk in the country of origin. It also identifies “improving the use of planned relocation as a preventative or responsive measure to disaster risk and displacement” as a priority area for future action.

UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) decisions associated with the Paris Agreement necessitated the establishment of a Task Force on Displacement. This Task Force was tasked with developing recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize, and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.

2015 – 2017

2017

A “[Toolbox on Planning Relocations to Protect People from Disasters and Environmental Change](#)” was created to complement the guidance developed in 2015.

2018

COP24 extended the mandate of the Task Force on Displacement (established under the Paris Agreement) and integrated it into the [Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage’s five-year rolling workplan](#). This plan emphasized enhanced cooperation and facilitation concerning human mobility, including migration, displacement, and planned relocation.

Additionally, the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration](#) called on States to “cooperate to identify, develop and strengthen solutions for migrants compelled to leave their countries of origin due to slow-onset natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation... including by devising *planned relocation* and visa options, in cases where adaptation in or return to their country of origin is not possible.”

2019

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) developed a “[Words into Action](#)” guide titled “[Disaster Displacement: How to Reduce Risk, Address Impacts and Strengthen Resilience](#),” which underscored the relevance and potential importance of planned relocation.

In recent years, discussions under the UNFCCC have increasingly included planned relocation among other forms of human mobility. This has been highlighted in the implementation of the rolling workplan of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM)’s Task Force on Displacement, the scoping of needs for technical support by the [Santiago Network on Loss and Damage](#), and the operationalization of related funds.

2022

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) released [guidance on planned relocation](#) in the context of disasters and climate change for Asia-Pacific National Societies.

2023

The [Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility](#) explicitly mentions planned relocation. Guidance is currently being developed to support planned relocation efforts at the regional level.

2024

The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons released a [thematic report to the Human Rights Council](#) on the planned relocation of communities in climate change and disaster contexts.



# NATIONAL POLICY AND NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS THAT ADDRESS PLANNED RELOCATION

A review of existing literature, including publications and databases commissioned or produced by the PDD, International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), resulted in the identification of six national frameworks (laws, frameworks, guidelines, policies, etc.) that specifically focus on planned relocation:

## Fiji - 2018

[Planned Relocation Guidelines: A framework to undertake climate change related relocation](#)

## Solomon Islands - 2022

[Planned Relocation Guidelines](#)

## Peru - 2012 (amended 2017)

[Ley de Reasentamiento Poblacional Para Zonas de Muy Alto Riesgo No Mitigable](#)

## Uruguay - 2018

[Proyecto de Reglamento Operativo de Programa Plan Nacional de Relocalizaciones](#)

## Jamaica - 2018

[Resettlement Policy Framework](#)

## Papua New Guinea - 2016

[Manam Resettlement Authority Act](#)

In addition to these six instruments that explicitly address planned relocation, 16 other instruments, primarily focused on climate change, disaster risk reduction or internal displacement, recognize planned relocation. Further in-depth analysis of each national policy, law or normative instrument is needed to ascertain the extent to which it comprehensively addresses protection needs of people undergoing planned relocation in disaster and climate contexts:

## Bangladesh - 2015

*National Strategy on the Management of Disaster and Climate Induced Internal Displacement*

## Bangladesh - 2020

*National Plan for Disaster Management*

## Bolivia - 2014

*Ley de Gestión de Riesgos*

## Burkina Faso - 2014

*Loi d'orientation relative à la prévention et à la gestion des risques, des crises humanitaires et des catastrophes*


## Colombia - 2012

*Ley por la cual se adopta la política nacional de gestión del riesgo de desastres y se establece el Sistema Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres y se dictan otras disposiciones*

## Fiji - 2018

*National Adaptation Plan*



 Fiji. Tukuraki village rebuilt on new site after landslides devastated the old village, 2022. © Fiji National Disaster Management Office

## Fiji - 2019

*Displacement Guidelines in the context of climate change and disasters*

## France - 2017

*Stratégie nationale de gestion intégrée du trait de côte*

## India - 2016

*National Disaster Management Plan*

## Malawi - 2015

*National Disaster Risk Management Policy*

## Myanmar - 2016

*Myanmar National Framework for Community Disaster Resilience*

## Pakistan - 2013

*National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy*

## Philippines - 2011

*National Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2028*

## Rwanda - 2013

*National Disaster Risk Management Plan*

## Vanuatu - 2018

*National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement*

## Vietnam - 2007

*National Strategy for Natural Disaster Prevention, Response and Mitigation to 2020*

# OVERVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE PDD ON PLANNED RELOCATION 2016-2024

Under its 2024-2030 Strategy, the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) engages to support efforts to “enhance public policies on planned relocation” and specifically to “improve the use of planned relocation as a preventative or responsive measure to disaster/climate risk and displacement”.

**In its efforts to implement the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda, since 2016, the PDD has always strived to support efforts on planned relocation.**

This overview of some of the PDD’s activities on planned relocation in 2016-2024 is structured in line with the five working modalities identified in the PDD’s 2024-2030 Strategy.

## 1

### Advocacy and support for the integrated implementation of global policy frameworks and commitments on disaster displacement

#### 1.1 Integrating planned relocation into climate change, disaster risk reduction and human mobility policies

In line with its toolbox approach, the [Nansen Initiative Agenda](#) for the Protection of Cross-Border Disaster-Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change recognizes the importance of addressing displacement, migration and planned relocation in disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and other development plans and strategies.

The PDD has integrated and given visibility to planned relocation in its work across intersecting policy and action areas:

- ➔ For example, Planned relocation has been included in the [Words into Action guidelines on disaster displacement](#) and the family of tools developed to help stakeholders integrate displacement into disaster risk reduction strategies and plans.
- ➔ Planned relocation is also included in the Global Compact for Migration (Objective) 5 and in the [CLIMB database](#), which measures progress of GCM implementation and identifies over 1600 policy instruments of relevance to human mobility in the context of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation.
- ➔ Likewise, the PDD’s work on climate change and loss and damage encompasses planned relocation, this includes for example the introduction in the [Recommendations](#) developed by the Task Force on Displacement that were welcomed by COP24, the development of a [five year rolling workplan](#) of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage, and the development of a technical guide on accessing financing for averting, minimizing and addressing the impacts of displacement in the context of climate change.
- ➔ Moreover, the PDD included messages on Planned Relocation in advocacy work in the context of the Human Rights Council and in the [Envoy of the Chair’s submission](#) to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

#### 1.2 Supporting the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons’ thematic report on planned relocation in the context of disasters and climate change

In 2024, the PDD Secretariat supported the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons with her [thematic report on planned relocations](#) in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, which was presented to the 56th Session of the Human Rights Council.

- ➔ In March 2024, the PDD Secretariat, together with the Special Rapporteur and regional partner organizations, organized a series of [online ‘conversations’](#) for the Americas, Pacific, Europe and Africa, and Asia on the topic of planned relocations in the context of disasters and climate change to support the Special Rapporteur’s call for input for her report. The online conversations highlighted that “planned relocation is not just about a person moving from place A to B, but about whole ‘worlds’ being moved, with respective beliefs, traditions and cultures.”
- ➔ On 21 June 2024, the PDD and the Special Rapporteur with a number of partners and co-sponsors, organized a [side event at the Human Rights Council](#) on a human rights-based approach to planned relocations in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change. The side event brought together representatives from governments, international organizations, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to discuss challenges and opportunities for the protection of human rights throughout planned relocation processes in the context of disasters and climate change. Planned relocations in Panama and Fiji were presented as case studies.

## 2

### Support for policy and normative development to address gaps in the prevention of disaster displacement and the protection of disaster displaced persons

#### 2.1 Supporting the toolbox of effective practice in 2017

The PDD supported efforts of UNHCR, the Brookings Institute, Georgetown University and the International Organization for Migration to develop a [Toolbox: Planning Relocations to Protect People from Disasters and Environmental Change](#).

#### 2.2 Supporting policy development on planned relocation in the Pacific

From 2019-2022, the PDD supported the [Pacific Response to Disaster Displacement \(PRDD\) Project](#). The project aimed at supporting regional and national efforts (in Fiji, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu) to reduce the risk and impact of disaster displacement on persons at risk of being displaced in Small Island Developing States in the Pacific through support to government policy development on planned relocation. Specifically, the PDD supported the government of Fiji with the development of draft guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures on Planned Relocation.

## 2.3 Regional Framework on Climate Mobility in the Pacific

The PDD consistently advocates for the concept of human mobility in the context of climate change to comprise migration, displacement and planned relocation. Planned relocation is included in the [Regional Framework on Climate Mobility in the Pacific](#).

## 2.4 Supporting regional guidelines on human rights in the Americas

In 2023–2024, the PDD collaborated with the [Inter-American Institute of Human Rights](#) (IIDH) on the development of a technical guide on planned relocation. Once reviewed and published, the guide will serve as a tool for a range of stakeholders, providing them with guidelines to ensure that planned relocation processes uphold human rights, with a particular emphasis on gender and intersectionality. Recognizing that planned relocation can disproportionately affect groups in vulnerable situations, this ‘Guidance Note’ is designed to address the specific rights and needs of all individuals.

## 2.5 Supporting policy development in Panama

In 2024, the PDD began collaborating with the government of Panama to enhance the strategic planning and implementation of planned relocations in the context of disasters and climate change. Through this partnership, Panama aims to develop robust frameworks and guidelines for planned relocation that prioritize the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of affected populations. As part of this initiative, a [multi-stakeholder workshop](#) was organized in May 2024. The PDD and the Ministry of Environment will also conduct a series of assessments to evaluate current knowledge and practices related to planned relocation within the country. These assessments will help identify existing challenges and opportunities, providing a foundation for informed decision-making and strategic planning.

## 2.6 Supporting policy development in Guatemala

In 2024, the PDD Secretariat began supporting the government of Guatemala to develop a set of recommendations and guidelines on planned relocation. The first step in this process was to identify national legal frameworks relevant to planned relocation, to understand how such processes are currently regulated and carried out in the absence of a dedicated instrument. This was followed by the identification of planned relocation case studies in the country, and relevant information was compiled based on a desk review and field visits. These activities formed the basis for the development of a set of recommendations for the national government to improve relevant policy frameworks and inform operations.

## 3

### Support for the implementation of effective practices and policy instruments relevant to prevention of risks and to address disaster displacement, at the national, regional and global levels

#### 3.1 Supporting a Regional Workshop on Planned Relocations to Protect Persons from Disasters and Environmental Change in the Latin American Context

In 2018, the PDD supported a regional workshop on planned relocations organized by the [World Bank Group/KNOMAD Thematic Working Group on Environmental Change and Migration](#). The workshop aimed to learn from the experiences of planned relocations undertaken in Latin America, present and receive feedback about the [Guidance and Toolbox for Planning Relocations](#), and encourage governments and other actors to begin to consider how planned relocations can be used as disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies.

#### 3.2 Providing direct technical support to Fiji

Since 2022, the PDD has supported the Secretariat of Fiji’s Taskforce for Relocation and Displacement (FTRD) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with the review and finalization of a [Comprehensive Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Methodology](#) (CVRAM) for planned relocations. At the request of partners, the PDD has extended support to integrate human rights and climate scenarios in the existing methodologies.

Following the revision of the tool, the PDD led the development of a methodological approach to assess and quantify tangible and intangible Non-Economic Loss & Damage (NELD) linked with the loss of cultural assets.

This includes the physical aspects of culture (e.g. loss of connection to land and to specific sites), the spiritual aspects of culture (e.g. loss of language and oral tradition, traditional dances, traditional practices and local knowledge) and the social aspects of culture (e.g. loss of traditional societal structures, social bonds and identity).


This was based on a desk review as well as a consultative process featuring interviews, focus group discussions and an assessment workshop with government representatives, civil society representatives and members of affected communities.

#### 3.3 Supporting Fiji in accessing funding on planned relocations

Since 2023, the PDD Secretariat has been supporting Fiji’s Climate Change Division through the secondment of a climate finance expert, who is supporting national fundraising efforts to identify funding opportunities to replenish the Climate Relocation of Communities (CROC) Trust Fund. This fund provides the resources to carry out planned relocation operations for at-risk communities. The range of funding sources explored include bilateral and multilateral donors, private contributions, and levies on private sector actors in high-emission sectors.





 Flood prone area in Popua Village a suburb in the outskirts of Nuku'alofa the Capital of Tonga. © ADB/Luis Enrique Ascui

## 4

### Support for enhanced understanding, evidence and data on disaster displacement and its impacts to identify challenges and needs

#### 4.1 Co-commissioning a global mapping of planned relocation cases

In 2021, the PDD and the Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at UNSW Sydney co-commissioned the study [Leaving Place, Restoring Home: Enhancing the Evidence Base on Planned Relocation Cases in the Context of Hazards, Disasters, and Climate Change](#). The report enhances the evidence base on planned relocation cases undertaken within countries and includes a dataset of over 300 planned relocations alongside an in-depth analysis of 34 cases. The global mapping serves as a foundation for future efforts to augment knowledge and data on planned relocation, and to promote approaches to policy and practice that mitigate risk and protect people from harm.

*Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, is the first of several related studies on planned relocation in the context of disasters and climate change including:

- A [complementary study](#) undertaken by IOM identifying planned relocation cases referenced in Spanish, French and Portuguese language literature
- Three studies commissioned by GIZ including a [Pacific regional snapshot](#), an Asia regional snapshot, and a [case study compilation](#).

The PDD Secretariat developed an overview document of the main insights gained from the set of studies across over 400 planned relocation cases. These include:

- **Planned relocation is a global phenomenon.** Identified cases occur in over 78 countries and territories, with a large proportion found in Asia.
- **Many planned relocation cases occur in multi-hazard contexts.** It is often the combined harms or risks of multiple hazards across time that contribute to a relocation decision.
- **Many planned relocation cases are ongoing, years after they have begun.** This underscores the complex nature of such processes, and the long duration of time required in some cases.
- **Most planned relocation cases involve a single origin to a single destination site.** However, other cases involve diverse spatial patterns, comprising single or multiple origin and destination sites.
- **Iterative and concerted efforts are necessary to monitor and synthesize data** on planned relocation cases and their characteristics to enhance and update the available evidence.
- **Maintaining a robust and up-to-date database of planned relocation cases**, their characteristics, and scale, will allow policymakers and practitioners to improve understanding of the phenomena, and assess the circumstances of diverse cases.
- **Determining which characteristics of planned relocation cases** are associated with more positive outcomes for relocated persons, and generating further refined understandings of effective practice and lessons learned, is necessary to enable policymakers and practitioners to minimize harms to affected people and promote and protect their human rights and dignity.

## 4.2 Contributing to academic discourse on planned relocation

In 2024, the PDD contributed to an article on [Navigating tensions in climate change-related planned relocation](#). To address current challenges and contribute to the development of guidelines for just and sustainable relocation processes, and drawing on the collective experience of 29 researchers, policymakers and practitioners from around the world, the paper calls attention to three fundamental tensions in planned relocation processes: (1) conceptualizations of risk and habitability; (2) community consultation and ownership; and (3) siloed policy frameworks and funding mechanisms.

## 4.3 Supporting UNU-EHS student research on access to funding for planned relocation as loss and damage

In 2024, the PDD commissioned a project for UNU-EHS students to conduct research on access to funding for planned relocation and loss and damage. The project aims to answer several key questions about potential funding for planned relocations including what funding mechanisms have been accessed or established by stakeholders engaged in existing planned relocation processes, what other or underexplored funding opportunities exist at national and international level, and what recommendations have been made by relevant stakeholders concerning the improvement of existing or establishment of new funding arrangements for planned relocation.

## 5

### Communication and information sharing on preventing, reducing and addressing disaster displacement

#### 5.1 Contributing to a Climate Academy on planned relocation

In 2023, the PDD participated in a [Climate Academy on “supporting community choices in a changing climate – leaning from planned relocations”](#) organized by UNU-EHS and the Munich Re Foundation in collaboration with IOM and UNFCCC. The Academy brought together a range of stakeholders to explore the overarching question: what do decision makers in policy and communities of practice need to know about planned relocation to support communities in making just and timely decisions related to climate change? As part of the Academy, the PDD contributed to the publication of a [Policy Brief on Integrating Planned Relocation into National Action](#) which features five key insights for consideration by governments and policymakers and was disseminated at COP28 and other policy fora.

#### 5.2 Supporting the development of a social simulation exercise on planned relocation

In 2023, the PDD Secretariat began supporting the development of a simulation exercise (“[serious game](#)”) on planned relocation for decision makers. This exercise is developed by the UN University’s Institute for Environment and Human Security and Centre for Systems Solutions in collaboration with the Platform on Disaster Displacement, funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Munich Re Foundation. The project runs until December 2025.

## DOCUMENTS TO CONSULT

- [Summary of Leaving Place, Restoring Home](#)
- [Leaving Place, Restoring Home I](#)
- [Leaving Place, Restoring Home II](#)
- [Global dataset Leaving Place, Restoring Home](#)
- [Report unpacking spatial complexity: case studies of planned relocation with multiple origin and destination sites](#)
- [Regional snapshot planned relocation in the Pacific](#)
- [Regional snapshot planned relocation in Asia](#)
- [Policy Brief – Integrating Planned Relocation in National Climate Action \(United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security\)](#)

**This Information Brief was developed based on excerpts from a scoping study by Dr. Erica Bower.**

**If you are a government representative, community representative, policy maker, practitioner or researcher working on planned relocation in the context of disasters and climate change and would like to engage with the PDD, please contact [info@disasterdisplacement.org](mailto:info@disasterdisplacement.org)**

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