

Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change II

Climate Mobility for Inclusive Solutions

The challenge

Climate change is an increasingly significant driver of human mobility, including (internal) migration, displacement, as well as planned relocation. Environmental stressors driving mobility decisions include:

- Slow-onset changes like rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns and sea level rise.
- Extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, typhoons, and heatwaves, which are increasing in frequency and intensity, reshaping livelihoods and increasing resource scarcity.

Climate hazards intersect with social, cultural, and economic factors, influencing both those who move and those who stay. Limited access to food, water, and livelihoods can make migration an essential adaptation strategy. However, planned relocation is increasingly becoming a measure of last resort, when other adaptation measures are no longer viable. When mobility becomes necessary, it should always occur with dignity, security and choice regarding how and where to relocate or move.

Human mobility can challenge host regions, infrastructure, increase inequality and deepen social tensions, particularly in urban areas. While women and marginalized groups can play key roles in strengthening resilience and community adaptation, they often navigate heightened risks like gender-based violence, barriers to resources and decision-making. Addressing these challenges requires inclusive governance, forward-looking policies and multi-stakeholder collaboration to ensure that mobility poses a choice rather than a necessity.

Our approach

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation, GIZ implements the second phase (2023-2027) of the Global Programme Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change (HMCCC II) and supports partners in addressing the complex links between human mobility and climate change.

Building on experiences from the first project phase (2017-2023), HMCCC II focuses on climate-resilient, city-centric, and conflict-sensitive approaches, with a special emphasis on gender equality. The programme develops context-specific solutions through pilot projects worldwide, enabling local capacities and institutional frameworks to enhance resilience. Human mobility is recognized not only as an adaptation strategy but also as a means of mitigating climate change related loss and damage. The programme assists the development and upscaling of successful models from partner countries, fosters targeted exchanges between cities and regions in the Global South, and integrates these insights into national and international policy frameworks.

Target group and partners

The programme supports populations severely affected by climate change in the ECOWAS region, the Philippines, and Fiji while assisting the African Union Commission (AUC) in its regional efforts. Special emphasis is placed on vulnerable groups, including women, children, Indigenous peoples as well as host communities. Key partners include international and regional organizations, national ministries, municipalities, academia, civil society, and NGOs.



Action areas

The Global Programme operates in three areas of action:

1. Practical Implementation - Supporting partners at regional, national, and municipal levels through pilot measures and capacity-building to strengthen responses to climate mobility.
2. Knowledge & Exchange - Generating and disseminating climate-resilient, gender-responsive, and urban-focused approaches while providing platforms for exchange.
3. Policy Advice - Advising relevant governmental entities and contributing to international policy processes.

HMCCC II on the ground

Fiji

Fiji's 300+ islands face severe climate risks, including sea level rise and extreme weather events. Planned relocation has been recognized as an adaptation measure of last resort. Fiji was the first country to develop national Planned Relocation Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), emphasizing a participatory, human-rights-based approach.

Since 2017, HMCCC has cooperated with The Pacific Community (SPC) to support Fiji's efforts in governing climate change related relocation and displacement, contributing to SOP development and the Climate Relocation of

Communities (CROC) Trust Fund for long-term financial support. HMCCC's second phase strengthens institutional capacities, supports the Fiji Taskforce on Relocation and Displacement, and provides training on SOPs, the CROC Trust Fund, and the Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Methodology (CRVAM).

Philippines

The Philippines, highly vulnerable to climate change, faces increasing migration due to extreme weather and environmental degradation. Since 2017, HMCCC has supported the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) in integrating migration data into local development plans and climate risk assessments. A study on climate migration patterns was also conducted.

In the second phase, the programme is continuing to digitalize local population and migration registries (RBIM) which enables municipalities to access aggregated data for decision making and increases their ownership. Furthermore, HMCCC supports municipalities in developing climate-resilient and gender-responsive approaches to human mobility and to mainstream these into local development plans.

ECOWAS

West Africa is one of the world's most climate-vulnerable regions, where extreme weather events and environmental changes have displaced over 6 million people in 2023 alone (IDMC, 2024). With agriculture-dependent economies, climate change threatens livelihoods and increases migration pressure.

Within the SDC co-financed component, HMCCC II supports the ECOWAS Commission in strengthening regional structures for gender-responsive, urban-focused, and conflict-sensitive approaches to human mobility, aligned with ECOWAS' Regional Climate Strategy (2022).

African Union

The African Union Commission (AUC) recognizes climate change as a major driver of migration, as outlined in its Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy (2022-2032) and Migration Policy Framework (2018). The AU's Agenda 2063 emphasizes climate-resilient development.

As part of the SDC co-financed component, HMCCC II supports the AUC in coordinating relevant departments and facilitating exchanges between the Regional Economic Communities and peer learning on climate mobility across Africa. In this way, HMCCC II contributes globally to shaping human mobility as an adaptation strategy to climate change.

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