

## Submission

### **Future work areas of the Nairobi work programme (NWP) Views of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UN University, the Norwegian Refugee Council and its Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**

**22 October 2012**

#### **Introduction**

The following views respond to the COP decision adopted in Durban, inviting Parties and relevant organizations to submit views on potential future areas of work of the Nairobi work programme (NWP).<sup>1</sup>

These views are premised on the NWP's twin objectives: "to assist all Parties, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States (SIDS), to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, and to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures to respond to climate change on a sound, scientific, technical and socio- economic basis, taking into account current and future climate change and variability."<sup>2</sup>

At COP 16 in Cancun, the Parties adopted the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF) which notes that "enhanced action and international cooperation on adaptation is urgently required to enable and support the implementation of adaptation actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in developing country Parties, taking into account the urgent and immediate needs of those developing countries that are particularly vulnerable."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the CAF specifies nine activities that constitute enhanced action.<sup>4</sup>

Supporting activities described in Paragraph 14 (a – i) of the CAF is compatible with the NWP's objectives and existing work areas. As a result, providing knowledge and evidence to support the implementation of the CAF should guide the direction of the NWP. Parties' implementation of many of these activities can draw upon existing knowledge and evidence consolidated under the NWP and its partners. However, significant gaps remain with respect to some of the activities described in Paragraph 14. Therefore, within its broader support of the implementation of the CAF, the NWP should give priority to addressing these evidence gaps, and it should therefore use these gaps as a basis for selecting future work areas.

#### **Work area on "climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation"**

Norway and Switzerland launched the Nansen Initiative on disaster-induced cross-border displacement on 2 October 2012, prompted by Paragraph 14(f), that categorizes as adaptation — "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" — and by the conviction that

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<sup>1</sup> FCCC/SBSTA/2011/L.26/Add.1.

<sup>2</sup> Decision 2/CP.11, Annex, Paragraph 1. FCCC/CP/2005/5/Add.1.

<sup>3</sup> Decision 1/CP.16, Paragraph 11. FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Paragraph 14 (a – i).

national, regional and international responses and the legal/normative framework applicable to human mobility challenges, particularly disaster-induced cross-border displacement, remain inadequate to date. The Nansen Initiative addresses the need for a more coherent and consistent approach to the protection of people displaced externally, i.e. across national borders, including but not limited to those triggered by climate change. The overall goal is to build consensus on key principles and elements regarding the protection of persons displaced across borders that sets the agenda for future action at domestic, regional and international levels.

One significant knowledge and evidence gap concerns CAF Paragraph 14 (f). While there has been considerable progress made on this issue during the last decade,<sup>5</sup> much more evidence—at policy-relevant spatial and temporal scales—is needed to support decision-making on matters relating to climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation.

Addressing displacement and migration associated with climate change and climate-related hazards is already a matter of urgent concern. In 2008, 20.3 million people were displaced by climate-related hazards; 15.2 million, 38.3 million and 13.8 million were displaced in 2009, 2010 and 2011, respectively.<sup>6</sup> These figures would be even higher if they accounted for people displaced owing to slow-onset climate hazards such as droughts and desertification.

As the recent IPCC special report *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* indicates, the magnitude of population movements is likely to increase due to the impacts of climate change on vulnerable exposed communities.<sup>7</sup> Most of the existing climate-related displacement and migration occurs—and will likely continue to occur—in developing countries that are vulnerable to climate change impacts. For example, 14 of the 15 countries with the highest number of disaster-displaced people in 2011 were developing countries.<sup>8</sup>

Helping developing countries vulnerable to climate change design and implement their national adaptation plans (NAPs) is at the core of the CAF. It is the role of the NWP to help marshal the appropriate evidence needed to inform these plans based on an accurate assessment of potential impacts and the effectiveness of available options. The NWP and its partners should identify gaps and orient future work around them.

## Conclusion

The manner in which population mobility prompted by climate change is managed can either increase the adaptive capacity or, on the contrary, augment the vulnerability of at-risk communities. The insufficient amount of evidence concerning climate-related displacement,

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<sup>5</sup> See, for example: Foresight: Migration and Global Environmental Change (2011) Final Project Report, the UK Government Office for Science, London.

<sup>6</sup> IDMC, 2012. *Global Estimates 2011: People displaced by natural hazard-induced disasters*. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneva.

<sup>7</sup> IPCC, 2012. *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation. A Special Report of Working Groups I and II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Field, C.B., V. Barros, T.F. Stocker, D. Qin, D.J. Dokken, K.L. Ebi, M.D. Mastrandrea, K.J. Mach, G.-K. Plattner, S.K. Allen, M. Tignor, and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, and New York, NY, USA, 582 pp.

<sup>8</sup> IDMC, 2012.

migration and planned relocation represents one very important gap. For low-lying SIDS, this gap is a vital concern. By identifying climate-related population mobility as an area of work, NWP would help address this evidence gap and increase the coherence among Convention mechanisms including, but not limited to, the Adaptation Committee, the work programme on loss and damage and the NAPs process.