

# Outcomes Article

## Rights on FIRE: Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality into Climate Change Adaptation

### PCCB Network: Raoul Wallenberg Institute

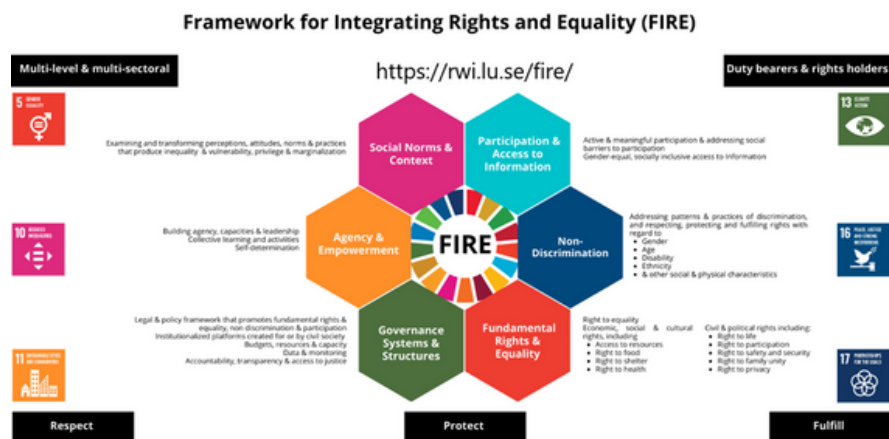
#### Background

On 24 April 2024 the PCCB network hosted an online panel discussion convened by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI), a new member of the network. The session, Rights on FIRE: Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality into Climate Change Adaptation, introduced the Framework for Integrating Rights and Equality (FIRE) and included reflections from RWI partners who have used FIRE in practical contexts in Asia and Africa.

Dr Matthew Scott, who leads the [human rights and environment thematic area](#) at RWI, kicked off the session with an introduction to FIRE. He explained how it was developed over the course of the five-year Building Resilience to through Inclusive and Climate-Adaptive Disaster Risk Reduction (BRDR) programme as an initiative to facilitate adherence to the ambition, reflected in the preamble to the Paris Agreement, that

Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity

Dr Scott explained how FIRE emerged iteratively through the systematic [consolidation of international standards and guidelines](#) combined with insights from feminist political ecology, and described how the framework had been used in a variety of capacity strengthening initiatives, including in relation to [emergency preparedness for response](#) and [climate displacement in African cities](#).



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## Practical Insights and Case Studies

After Dr Scott's presentation, Professor Tasneem Siddiqui of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit ([RMMRU](#)) at the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh introduced the Bangladesh Policy on Disaster Displacement. She addressed questions about how the Policy came to include specific human rights language and references to relevant international standards and guidelines, including by aligning the Policy with wider social policies focusing on the situation of people in conditions of particular vulnerability, as well as the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction. Specifically, the Policy is informed by the 1998 UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and thus systematically addresses prevention of displacement, protection of people during displacement, and facilitation of durable solutions to displacement. She further explained how potential sensitivities associated with human rights were mitigated through this express alignment with the Sendai Framework and social policy, alongside broad engagement with civil society, parliament and an extensive consultative process across 27 ministries.

Ms Dewi Yuliana from the Directorate General for Human Rights under the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights described how her participation in an RWI blended learning course that used FIRE to explore dimensions of disaster displacement, followed by ongoing collaboration with [RWI's regional office](#) in Jakarta, led to the adoption by the government of FIRE as a tool for localizing work on human rights. She acknowledged that professionals working at local levels could not be expected to have human rights expertise and that the simplicity of FIRE helps responsible actors to apply principles that may otherwise not have informed their practice.

Finally, Mr Yusufu Camara of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS) recounted how a [city profile](#) developed as part of a co-learning project convened by RWI and Lund University together with local authorities in Nairobi, Kampala and Freetown used FIRE to identify dimensions of urban disaster displacement from a human rights and gender equality perspective. He provided a snapshot of the insights generated using FIRE to understand displacement risk in the informal settlement of Kroo Bay in the country's capital, Freetown. In addition to highlighting the gender dimension, he shared insights into how the fundamental rights dimension of FIRE can help to understand past failures in planned relocation, using an example from the 2017 landslide relocation initiative. He confirmed that FIRE had been integrated as a tool in the Red Cross Society's five-year strategic plan under the action area on displacement, including in relation to evacuation and refugee reintegration. The SLRCS had also started using FIRE in their own capacity strengthening initiatives with CSO partners, as well as in their work with authorities like the national disaster management agency.

In addition to one question about the extent to which FIRE integrates the recently recognized right to a healthy environment (it does, but this is an area for further work), one question from a participant concerned the point Dr Scott made in his intervention about adapting the language used to introduce FIRE in different institutional settings. This point relates to the acknowledged sensitivities that many actors have concerning human rights, whether because of its perceived association with western values or because of the emphasis many actors place on accountability for



human rights violations. Dr Scott affirmed that FIRE can be used in multiple contexts where accountability is not a dominant priority, and explained how FIRE works best as a tool for helping to ask relevant questions, whether in policy or situational analysis. Accountability is certainly a feature of human rights that many actors pursue well, but FIRE focuses on the wealth of other ways in which human rights can respond to the climate emergency.

To learn more on this event, head to the [webpage](#).



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