

DISASTER DISPLACEMENT IN THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN AFRICA

PREAMBLE

- ❖ The number of internally displaced populations has continued to rise in the past two decades. In Sub Saharan Africa, the number of new disaster displacements jumped to 4.3 million from 3.4 million in 2019.
- ❖ Inequality, environmental degradation, climate change and disproportionate impacts of disasters are the main factors for displacement in Africa.
- ❖ A number of gender-based barriers and discrimination hinder migrants for them to enjoy the full human rights.
- ❖ Migrants and displaced populations provide important social and economic contributions to their countries of origin and destination despite the myriad challenges that confront them.
- ❖ However, limited migrant and displaced persons data disaggregated continues to hamper evidence-based policymaking and well-informed public discourse on migration and displacement in Africa.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (A/RES/73/195), is the first intergovernmental agreement, prepared under the auspices of the United Nations, to cover all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It was adopted at an intergovernmental conference on migration in Marrakesh, Morocco on 10 December 2018. It is grounded on international human rights law and reaffirms States' commitment to respecting, protecting, and fulfilling all human rights for all migrants. The Global Compact rests on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and upholds the principles of non-regression and non-discrimination.

The GCM enumerates 23 objectives for State action, bolstered by specific commitments, that seek to address challenges related to today's migration. The GCM commitments and actions is a useful guide for States and Africa to meet their human rights obligations when designing migration governance measures that reduce the risks and vulnerabilities migrants face at different stages of migration, and create conducive conditions that empower all migrants to become active members of society. In general, the Compact aims at guaranteeing the safety of life, the protection of people, the safeguard of human rights, the sharing of rights and duties of the states and the reinforcement of migration flows governance. Furthermore, the GCM permits States to translate abstract commitments into practical, cooperative action on specific migration issues.

By constantly monitoring implementation of these objectives progress toward achieving the rights of the displaced persons can be guaranteed.

Global Compact for Migration and Disaster Displacement

The GCM makes a number of references to migration, mobility, displacement and evacuation. Displacement is mentioned twice, migration 84 times and mobility twelve. Specifically objective 2 (j) encourages to 'Integrate displacement considerations into disaster preparedness strategies and promote cooperation with neighboring countries to prepare for early warning, contingency planning, stockpiling, coordination mechanisms, evacuation planning, reception and assistance arrangements, and public information.' Objective 2(l) further encourages [] 'to take relevant recommendations from State-led consultative processes, such as the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change, and the Platform on Disaster Displacement'. Finally, objective 3 (b) stresses [] 'that returning migrants are assisted in their reintegration process through effective partnerships, including to avoid their becoming displaced in the country of origin upon return'.

Objective two (a), (h), (j), (k) and (l) commits governments and stakeholders to develop measures to address structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin. The objective emphasizes the need to integrate displacement into disaster preparedness as well as early warning systems, contingency planning, stock piling and coordination mechanism. In so doing, the movements associated with disasters would more predictable and regular thereby allowing governments and stakeholders to plan ahead to provide effective protection measures in all phases of their movement. Addressing vulnerabilities associated with migration is also stressed particularly for women, children, older persons and people with disabilities which would enhance building their resilience and adaptive capacity.

By encouraging the need to strengthen joint analysis and sharing of risk information to better map, understand, predict, and address migration movements, such as those that may result from sudden-onset and slow-onset natural disasters, the GCM fosters coherence with the Sendai Framework priorities and principles. In addition, the Compact considers the adverse effects of climate change, as well as stressing the need to develop adaptation and resilience strategies, including across borders, that take into account the potential implications on migration.

Furthermore, the Compact encourages governments to lead its implementation, to ensure effective respect for and protection and fulfilment of the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status, across all stages of the migration cycle.

DISPLACEMENT AND ITS IMPACTS ON SDGs

The number of newly displaced persons as a result of disasters continues to rise in Africa in the past decade (Figure 1). According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2021), the number of new disaster displacements in Sub Saharan Africa jumped to 4.3 million from 3.4 million in 2019 while that from violence rose to 6.8 million people. Five countries with most displacements in Africa are Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Mozambique with majority of the displaced being young persons aged 5 -14 years.

The major factors that forced people to move are flooding, land degradation, locust invasion, the global COVID -19 pandemic and drought that interacted with other forces to compel people to move. This highlights the increasingly complex and interconnected drivers of mobility calling for an inclusive, holistic and anticipatory approach to managing risks.

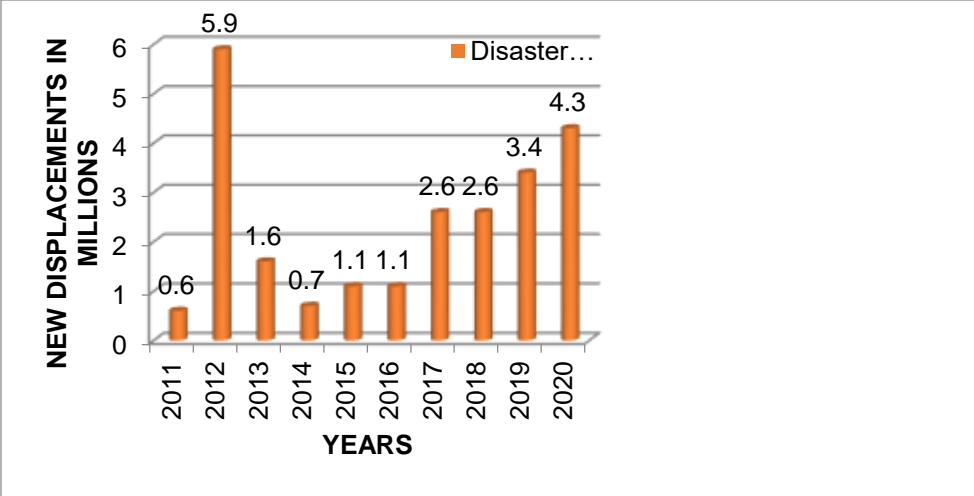


Figure 1: New disaster displacements for SSA, (2011-2020)

Disaster displacement has profound impacts on populations, particularly on children, women, older people and people with disabilities. These include social and psychological impacts, heightened requirement for protection, disruption of family life and majority of the affected populations are sidelined from recovery and development initiatives. Migrant populations get left behind in development when they lack choices, opportunities and capabilities to earn adequate and consistent income as well as inequitable benefit from development. According to Chambers, (1994), ‘social inferiority, physical weaknesses, seasonal deprivation, vulnerability, powerlessness and humiliation’ interact, to form a complex web that keeps disadvantaged populations such as migrants trapped in poverty. Millions of people in Africa remain illiterate and the malnutrition and primary school dropout rates are disturbing. Among the displaced populations, these indicators are extremely disturbing and need urgent action to ensure they are not left behind as we make development progress toward 2030 agenda.

This calls for governments in collaboration with stakeholders to support reduce the risk of displacement and if it occurs ensure all migrants fully participate in social and economic activities and further enjoy their human rights in line with the GCM, the PoA and national policy frameworks that seek to reduce vulnerabilities for migrants further support them lead a productive life. This is further reinforced by SDG 10.7 that lays a firm foundation on the measures to be made to reduce the risk of migrants and strengthen their resilience.

Addressing the drivers of migration in a systematic and comprehensive manner is critical to the achievement of Goal 10 of the SDGs that makes a strong call to ‘leave no one behind’ as we make progress to achieve to 2030¹. The Agenda’s strong focus on the disadvantaged and marginalized populations, who often are ignored, is a paradigm and revolutionary shift in the development approach.

¹ UN, 2015: Sustainable Development Goals 2015 -2030. Goal 10.7 “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

Box 1: Terminologies

a. Affected

People who are affected, either directly or indirectly, by a hazardous event. Directly affected are those who have suffered injury, illness or other health effects; who were evacuated, displaced, relocated or have suffered direct damage to their livelihoods, economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets. Indirectly affected are people who have suffered consequences, other than or in addition to direct effects, over time, due to disruption or changes in economy, critical infrastructure, basic services, commerce or work, or social, health and psychological consequences.

b. Disaster displacement

Disaster displacement refers to situations where people are forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence due to a disaster or to avoid the impact of an immediate and foreseeable natural hazard. Such displacement results from affected persons being exposed to a natural hazard in a situation where they are too vulnerable and lack the resilience to withstand the impacts of that hazard.

c. Migration

'Migration' is used to describe movement that is predominantly voluntary. Movements that people make 'in an attempt to build their resilience and ability to adapt to slow-onset hazards and environmental change' are referred to as migration as adaptation

HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF DISASTER DISPLACEMENT

The reduction of risk is central in enhancing the resilience and adaptation of migrants and further contributes to achieving the SDGs by ensuring 'no one is left behind'. Objectives two and five of the GCM and the SDG 10.7 lay a firm foundation on the measures to be made to reduce the risk of migrants and strengthen their resilience. The GCM stresses the need for risk reduction through the following actions: (i) Enhancing data on migration linked with disasters (18.h); (ii) Adaptation, DRR and resilience measures that take account of migration (18.b); (iii) Integrating displacement in preparedness and transboundary cooperation, and (iv) Regional and sub regional mechanisms linked to humanitarian assistance that is connected to disasters and strengthen collaboration between humanitarian and development partners to better address disaster -induced movements.

Moreover, reducing drivers of displacement such as climate change, extreme weather and climate events and environmental degradation is key in reducing displacement risk. Migration and displacement as a result of climate change is project to rise due to sea level rise, desertification, increase in temperatures, loss of biodiversity and land and forest degradation.

In the last two decades, AU has continued to demonstrate strong commitment to the implementation of the DRR agenda in the continent. Recent commitments include the Yaounde Declaration (2015), the Tunis Declaration (2018) and recently the Nairobi Declaration (2021). A revised matrix of the PoA to guide implementation of the SFDRR and an institutional framework for implementation for multi hazard EWS in Africa were adopted during the recent Africa Regional Platform for DRR in Nairobi².

Implementing DRR strategies in Africa is also shaping displacement in context of disasters. The Programme of Action (PoA) for the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction designed by the AUC is a good example. It can further contribute to achievement of Agenda 2063 in the continent. Together with the Regional Frameworks for Free movement of persons they can make a robust basis for protecting people displaced internally or across borders by disasters and climate change. These frameworks imposes obligations on African states to

² UNDRR, 2021: Africa Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction: The Nairobi Declaration. Prevention Web.

prevent displacement, protect those displaced, and promote conditions for safe return and other lasting solutions.

Such human rights-based and gender-response targeted policy measures can be designed and implemented to facilitate people who may need to move (internally or cross border) from unavoidable stressors include disaster and climate risks by facilitating mobility through conducive environments for planned and orderly migration into areas of low risk and high opportunity.

To better understand the risk of displacement requires investing in data and disaster information management system to collect, analyze, archive and predict risk of displacement. Limited availability of data disaggregated by gender, sex, socio-economic status and other characteristics continues to hamper accurate mapping, analysis, understanding and prediction of risk of

Box 4: Tools and approaches for modelling disaster risk

- 1. Probabilistic risk profiles:** Using probabilistic risk profiles, CIMA Foundation in collaboration with UNDRR and other stakeholders has carried out risk profiles for a number of Sub Saharan Africa Countries. CIMA used 2 climate scenarios for the 1979-2018 period with disaster risk analyzed under projected climate conditions. The basic feature of probabilistic risk assessment is to give an estimate of future displacement risk and economic losses under different scenarios for rapid onset disasters such as floods.
- 2. Retrospective and prospective risk assessment:** This approach uses the number of houses damaged to estimate the number of people displaced. The data is obtained from national disaster data bases and complemented by IDMC's Global Internal Displacement Databases to account for the limited temporal and spatial data from countries. To overcome historical gaps in data bases and make the estimation global, the prospective risk assessment methodology was developed where hazard, exposure and vulnerability are used from countries. This allows to estimate the expected impact of disaster on displacement in each country (for details see the GAR 2015 Methodology).
- 3. Big data approaches:** Uses artificial intelligence or machine learning approaches to best predict displacement outcomes. An aggregated database that incorporates indicators of vulnerability and drivers of displacement is developed using sensors, digital devices, log files, internet and social media that locate and track online real-time data sources to process, analyze and predict disaster displacement. The software uses the 'training data' to iteratively teach itself about what best predicts displacement over space and time.
- 4. System dynamic models:** System dynamic models are used to explore the drivers of displacement in a deeply contextual way. Disaster settings – what makes disasters happen and crises exacerbate – are inherently dynamic and chaotic, and these models are designed to explore the reality of non-linear relationships in complex systems. Analysts use system dynamics models to investigate the ever-changing interconnectivity of indicators that explain displacement, as they differ across contexts and time, and how the causes of displacement are influenced by other preliminary mediating factors.
- 5. Groundswell methodology:** It used to predict climate migration that is projected to escalate as climate change grows against future changes in population and crop production over large areas. It focuses on water availability, crop productivity, sea level rise and storm surge as driver's migration.

Data sources

Probabilistic models, big data approaches, system dynamic models, agent-based models and risk indices are the major techniques that are increasingly used by various organizations to predict the risk of displacement in the context of disasters. A summary of these models and techniques are presented below. They rely on data from various sources to analyze the risk of migration and displacement. Many countries and organizations are collecting, analyzing and achieving data on trends and damages on losses from disasters. However, missing data, lack of disaggregated data and under reporting due to limited infrastructural and technical capacities at country level are challenges hampering effective reporting and monitoring as well as prediction of risk of displacement in Africa. The major sources of data are:

- I. **IDMC'S Global Internal Displacement data:** This database analyzed and provides comprehensive information on disaster displacement worldwide associated with conflict since 2003 and that for disasters since 2008.
- II. **DesInventer:** It is in open data base operated by UNDRR that analyzes disaster trends and damage and losses data bases for more that 89 countries for SDG and SFDRR monitoring system.
- III. **EM-DATA:** Open-data base operated by EM-DAT launched by the CRED. It contains more than 22,000 disaster records worldwide from 1900 and about 300 events are recorded annually.
- IV. **Natural Catastrophe Services:** This is another global data base on disasters founded in 1974 in Germany that provided comprehensive and reliable information on economic and human impacts of natural hazards. Regional and country level information is consolidated to make to allow regional analysis.
- V. **SIGMA (Swiss Re):** This data base on damage and losses from disasters was founded by Swiss Insurer in 1970 where 300-350 events are added into the data base annually. Risk data, place of the disaster, date and place of disaster and information on the victims is included.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GCM is a comprehensive framework for the reduction of disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disasters. It emphasizes the need to integrate displacement into disaster preparedness as well as early warning systems, contingency planning, stock piling and coordination mechanisms, which would enhance building their resilience and adaptive capacity. Furthermore, the GCM calls for reducing risk and vulnerabilities for migrants in line with SDG Goal 10 that calls for addressing the drivers of migration in a systematic and comprehensive manner. However, there is need to complement this framework with others such as the Sendai Framework to strengthen understanding the risk of displacement and strengthen preparedness and multi hazard early warning systems in context of displacement.

Addressing the drivers of disaster risk is an essential element in the reduction of the risk of disaster displacement. Additionally, neighboring countries who become host to the displaced communities need to consider the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons, thereby adopting various tools, approaches and methodologies to support research as well as model and predict disaster displacement is crucial.

This paper makes the following recommendations to decision makers:

1. Support collection of comprehensive data to better understand the nature of the displacement risk as a basis of building resilience of migrants and displaced populations.

To strengthen resilience of vulnerable populations, there is need to understand the nature of exposure and vulnerability of populations and how disasters and climate change impact people. This requires countries to collect, analyze and archive reliable and accurate data in a usable format disaggregated by sex, gender, age, disability, migration status and other characteristics such as how many people are exposed or are at risk of displacement, how many are displaced, to where and for how long. Currently, very few countries are recording these data due to technical and infrastructural challenges and cannot be useful to guide policy and decision making. Limited spatial and temporal coverage of data poses challenges in using the information to predict risk of displacement at regional level. More needs to be done by governments with support from stakeholders to ensure that migrants and displaced persons are part of national development agenda and national statistical system is revamped to account for data on migrants.

2. Take account of demographic, climate change and development changes in the models to better predict displacement.

Migration and disaster displacement is expected to continue rising in Africa due to population growth, increased exposure from extreme weather and climate events and land degradation. Climate change is projected to escalate the frequency and intensity of these extreme climate events hence fuel more migration and displacement in the continent. Projecting future displacement and migration should therefore take into account the changes in demographic, inclusive growth, climate change and heightened frequency of these extreme events. The current models that are used to predict the risk of displacement should account for these changes at grid level including the extent of future economic growth, a key migration driver. The amount of data required to run the models is, however, significant and more effort and resources are needed to address the current data gaps at country and regional levels.

3. Adopt gender-sensitive preparedness measures and policies to enhance increase orderly migration and boost economic growth.

Preparedness measures including effective people-centered early warning systems are important in supporting orderly migration that avoids disruptive mass displacements from sudden onset disasters such as flooding. Cross border migrants and even IDPs as a result of disasters should then be supported to acquire decent work and maximize their contribution to the socio-economic growth of where they are settled and communities of origin and further ensure they are protected from all forms of exploitation and discrimination (GCM Objectives 6;7; 16; 18; 20 and 22). Migrant women, though they are often paid less than men, remit higher proportion of their earning for use in healthcare and education back in their countries of origin³.

³ UN, 2019: The Impact of migration on migrant women and girls: A gendered perspective. Report on Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants. United Nations Security Council, 2019.

Annex 1: The 23 Objectives of the GCM

Annex 1: Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration objectives

1. Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies.
2. Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.
3. Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration.
4. Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation.
5. Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration.
6. Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work.
7. Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration.
8. Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants.
9. Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants.
10. Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration.
11. Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner.
12. Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral.
13. Use immigration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives.
14. Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle.
15. Provide access to basic services for migrants.
16. Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion.
17. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration.
18. Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences.
19. Create conditions for migrants and Diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries.
20. Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants.
21. Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration.
22. Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits.
23. Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular

Annex 2: How climate change triggers migration and displacement

Box 3: Ways in which climate change can cause migration

- i. **Sea level rise:** Globally the seas have risen by 20 cm since the start of the twentieth century due to expansion of seas and glacial melting displacing thousands of people.
- ii. **Desertification:** Nearly six hundred and thirty million people are affected by the irreversible trend of desertification of the dry lands globally and the trend is worsening due to global warming.
- iii. **Increase in temperatures:** On average temperatures have risen by 0.18 °C globally since 1981 affecting water, soil moisture, human health, food security, marine life and ecosystem changes.
- iv. **Land and forest degradation:** Expansion and unsustainable management of land and pasture lands and exacerbated by climate change is causing land degradation.
- v. **Loss of biodiversity:** Increasing temperatures and altered precipitation patterns are affecting the structure, composition and functions of ecosystems, causing biodiversity loss and reductions in the ecosystem services that support human wellbeing and may affect migration.