International Labour Organization

EMERGING PRACTICES IN CLIMATE CHANGE, HUMAN MOBILITY AND A JUST TRANSITION

-A SOUTH-SOUTH PERSPECTIVE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The interaction between climate change, human mobility, and just transition principles presents an urgent challenge, particularly for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific and Caribbean. These nations face climate vulnerabilities, including rising sea levels, extreme weather, and environmental degradation, driving internal and cross-border migration. This report explores emerging practices addressing these challenges with a holistic, collaborative approach.

Climate-change induced mobility is shaped by environmental, economic, social, and political factors. While migration is an adaptive response, it remains a last resort for many communities deeply connected to their ancestral lands. Voluntary immobility has emerged as a key consideration, with affected populations seeking ways to stay in place with dignity. The report highlights top-down and bottom-up strategies for sustainable, rights-based mobility solutions, as per stipulated preliminarily in climate accords that seek to fortify novel standards in international humanitarian law and climate-related (international) diplomacy.

A key focus is the role of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) in fostering policy innovation and peer learning. The report explores seven emerging practices, including Fiji's Planned Relocation Guidelines, Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement, and the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, among others. These initiatives emphasize participatory governance, community engagement, and regional coordination as productive avenues forward in dealing with climate-induced challenges.

The ILO is committed to the promotion of **South-South and Triangular Cooperation** recognizing it as a key manner to promote decent work for all, as well as a strategic vehicle for promoting mutually beneficial learning and cooperation in support of the 2030 Agenda. Its two basic **modalities** are:

South-South Cooperation (SSC): it is defined as collaboration among peers, guided by the principles of solidarity and non-conditionality. This is done among actors from two or more countries of the South and all stakeholders can benefit from the process.

Triangular Cooperation: it refers to South-South Cooperation supported by one or more "Northern " partners. It must have actors from at least two countries of the South as protagonists, and the principles of solidarity and non-conditionality must be maintained.

Labour migration is another critical aspect of climate mobility, with SIDS exploring planned (international) migration pathways. The International Labour Organization (ILO) promotes just transition policies aligning with global labour standards while addressing climate-induced mobility. The report stresses the need to integrate labour rights, social protection, and

economic opportunities into climate mobility frameworks to prevent exploitation and enhance resilience.

The report also highlights the risks of (permanent) land dispossession and economic marginalization when communities are displaced, stressing the need for legal protections and equitable governance to ensure climate-induced mobility remains a choice, not a forced outcome. Vulnerable communities should be shielded at all costs from being turned into landless 'climate refugees'—depriving them not only of their dignity but equally of one of their basic means of subsistence.

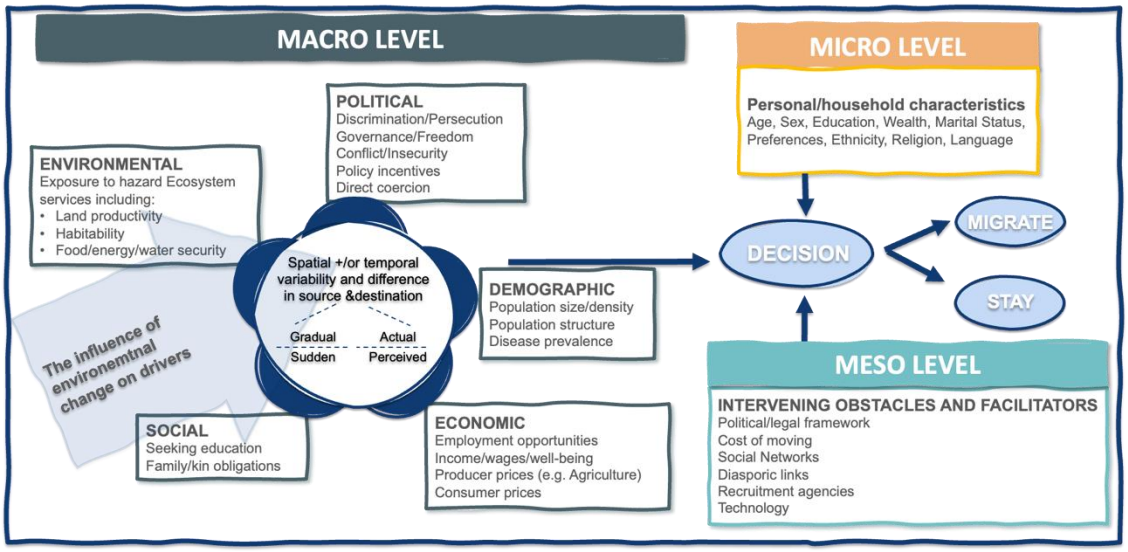
Large industrialised nations bear historical responsibility for emissions and thus ought to support just transition initiatives, disaster risk reduction initiatives, and climate resilience projects. Strengthening South-South Cooperation, while integrating it into a triangular format globally (through financing and knowledge exchange), and integrating therein local knowledge and participatory decision-making processes are essential steps toward developing a more sustainable response to climate-induced mobility. By mapping emerging practices and challenges, this report provides a preliminary foundation for policy innovation, collaboration, and advocacy.

Finally, STTC reframes climate mobility as a collective strategy rather than a crisis imposed by external forces. Unlike traditional aid models, SSTC fosters regional governance and peer-driven policy innovation, empowering SIDS to shape adaptation on their own terms. However, labour migration as an adaptation tool risks reinforcing economic dependencies if social protections are weak. Just transition policies must ensure mobility remains a choice, not a forced necessity. Regional frameworks like the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility demonstrate SIDS solidarity, but disparities within the block remain. For SSTC to be truly transformative, it must address power imbalances in climate governance, ensuring that mobility strategies prioritize agency, equity, and resilience.

Introductory Notes

It is widely suggested that international migration can be a win-win-win scenario, benefiting migrants, origin countries, and destination countries. Migrants gain employment opportunities, while origin countries receive remittances that alleviate poverty (among former or related households back home), tend to improve an outlook education and healthcare, and boost overall economic productivity. Destination countries benefit from filling labour shortages, stimulating economic growth, and gaining access to diverse skills and perspectives. Individuals may be *pushed* to migrate due to limited job opportunities, low income, or discrimination, often exacerbated by demographic and environmental pressures, especially in vulnerable nations. Conversely, they may be *pulled* by the promise of better employment, higher earnings, and improved access to education and healthcare (DOAN, D. *et al.*, 2023)[1]. Indeed, "mobility outcomes are influenced by a multiplicity of complex interrelated forces operating at the *macro* (social, economic, environmental and political), *meso* (mostly intervening obstacles and [cumulative] facilitators), and *micro* (personal and household characteristics) levels" (ANDREOLA SERRAGLIO, D. *et al*., 2021: p. 24)[2].

Figure 1 - Drivers of migration and the influence of environmental change



Source: Adapted from Foresight Report (2011).

[1] DOAN, D. *et al*., (2023). Migration and labor mobility from Pacific Island countries Background Paper for the World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Society.

[2] ANDREOLA SERRAGLIO, D. et (2021). Migration, Environment, Disaster and Climate Change Data in the Eastern Caribbean – Regional Overview.

In the wake of these debates, a more nuanced picture of the relationship between climate change[3] and displacement is emerging. Climate change is used as a shorthand that captures the complex scientific evidence of global warming and, in this course, also includes disasters and environmental degradation which are associated with climate change. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN body established in 1988 to produce and communicate scientific reports in terms of the latest climate science, the environmental consequences of a continued global rise in temperature could be catastrophic. In 2023, IPCC[4] noted that the Earth's average temperature currently sits at an increase of approximately 1.1°C above preindustrial levels, projected to reach or exceed 1.5°C of warming within the next two decades. Importantly, this would be the case even with the immediate commitment of states to drastically cut their emissions. The matter is therefore taken to be very urgent and critical.

Slow onset impacts of climate change such as drought, sea-level rise (SLR), salination, are distinguished from sudden onset and extreme weather events associated with climate change such as storm flooding or hurricanes, among others. The increasing view among migration scholars is that climate change does play a role in driving human displacement, but that its role is complicated to measure in an isolated manner. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that the nature of migration is shifting, driven by factors beyond traditional economic motivations, although (perceived) labour opportunities remain a key driver of migration.

Climate change and environmental degradation are increasingly compelling people to migrate both internally and cross-border. Although the question of how and to what extent climate change can lead to migration continues to generate debate, a consensus is emerging on the complex, context-dependent, and multifactorial nature of the drivers of migration as seen above. One example of the complexity at hand is that many climate-affected communities, especially those in the Global South, would consider 'staying with dignity'—even in the face of repetitive climate hazards—and hence not opt for (international) migration in the occasion that they are able, and assisted, to rebuild their livelihoods (and/or have access to their former lands, used for e.g. subsistence farming), not least given the historical and socio-cultural attachments to the ancestral lands they have inhabited for generations.

Since 2007 the International Organization for Migration (IOM) applies terms such as 'environmental migrants' and 'environmental migration' in its approximation of a new definition of 'climate migration', which it has been trying to put on the map:

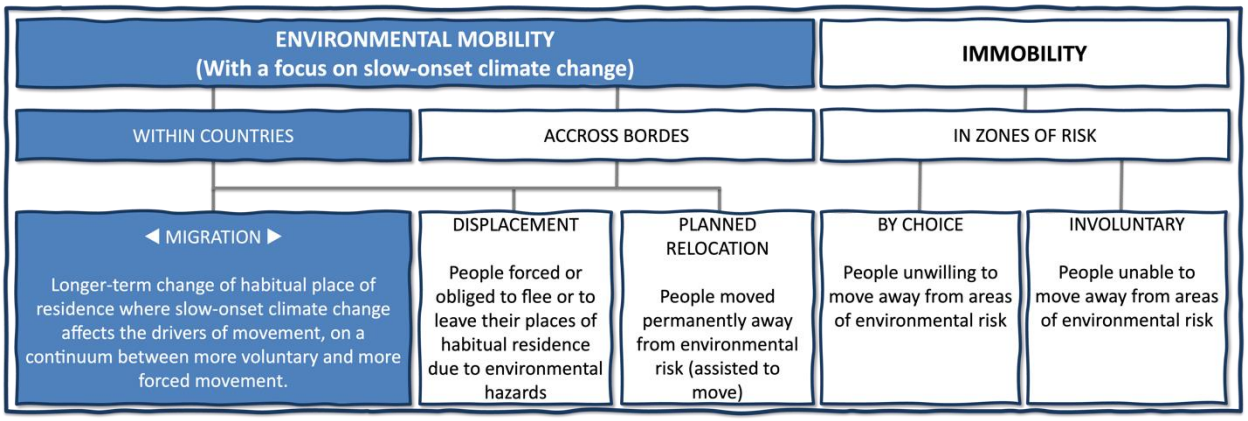
> *"the movement of a person or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment due to climate change, are obliged to*

[3] ITCILO (2024), Course handbook: E-learning on the labour dimensions of climate change and human mobility rights-based responses to climate-induced mobility.
[4] https://www.ipcc.ch.

leave their habitual place of residence, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, within a State or across an international border" (IOM, 2019a)[5].

In the aftermath of the Cancun Agreements[6] format, so-called "climate change-induced mobility" was (conceptually) categorized around three (artificially separated) forms of human mobility, although not legally defined: **displacement** (usually a community-led adaptation strategy, when people are forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence), **migration** (movements that are predominantly voluntary but facilitated by local/regional/national forms of government authorities), and **planned relocation** (organized relocation, ordinarily instigated, supervised and carried out by the state with the consent or upon the request of the community under the framework impetus of intra-national or international cooperation/assistance/agreements, either in multi-stakeholder, bilateral or multi-lateral formats). Nevertheless, and often overlooked, when an environmental change affects a migration driver as a new interactive variable, it does not necessarily reflect on a migratory movement *per se*, as people may not have the resources to do it so, even if needed (ILO, 2022)[7].

Figure 2: Human mobility and immobility in the context of climate change



Sources: Extended and adapted from Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility (2014), with inputs from OCHA (1998); UNFCCC (2010); IOM (2014); IPCC (2014b); Brookings Institution, Georgetown University, and UNHCR (2015); and IDMC (2017a). *Note:* Mobility and immobility are not mutually exclusive.

[5] IOM (2019a). Glossary on Migration. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION LAW.
[6] https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/environmental-migration.
[7] ILO (2022). Just Transition Policy Brief. Human mobility and labour migration related to climate change in a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all. October 2022.

Moreover, climate change significantly interacts with various social and economic factors, shaping human mobility as a means of adaptation to mitigate life-threatening risks, enhance resilience, or diversify livelihoods. Tackling decent work deficits and addressing how they intersect with climate impacts can ensure that migration becomes a voluntary and empowering choice rather than a necessity, an unsustainable pathway into precarity, or even a (top-down) enforced pathway (with little to no return). Regarding some aspects of the debate, a degree of vigilance is due. Indeed, humanitarian evacuation or climate-induced mobility should not be used to permanently and in perpetuity block people's access to their lands—especially not under the guise of '(re)development' and in the occasion that an *ad hoc* emergency (storm, hurricane) has subsided, and former inhabitants/landowners prefer to (temporarily) return (if only to inspect their lands and properties). Recognizing the potential of migration as a general adaptation strategy, however, policymakers are now exploring ways to leverage planned labour migration to build resilience in the face of climate change. Yet, the effectiveness of this approach varies across contexts. By promoting 'safe, orderly, regular migration', governments and international organizations may be able to contribute to the development of both origin and destination countries, as well as to the welfare of the people most affected by climate-induced change, while addressing, in the meantime, the larger (multi-lateral, scientific, and collaborative) challenges posed by climate change.

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Additionally, climate change is increasingly recognized as a major threat to global development goals, with its effects being felt most severely in developing and least developed countries who have historically emitted lower greenhouses gases and that often face a higher frequency of climate-related hazards while dealing with limited response capacities and inadequate financial and technical resources. Therefore, developed nations are urged to mitigate climate impacts while the most vulnerable countries are called to adopt robust national and regional adaptation strategies. Hence, while a South-South Cooperation format may be ideal in terms of knowledge exchange and emancipatory collaboration, it may be ambitious (especially in terms of financing) to leave such initiatives bereft of international support. In this sense, there

is an argument to be made for the latter to be fortified through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) formats, should the need or active request therefore arise.

Events like floods, storms, droughts, rising sea levels, desertification, and declining agricultural productivity are major triggers of human mobility every year and in virtually every country. Numbers remain speculative given that internal displacements often do not register on international statistics. Some think tanks project that the number of people forced to move due to natural disasters and climate-related changes will be approximate 1.2 billion by 2025 (IEP, 2020)[8]. According to UNHCR's Mid-Year Trends 2024[9], over 117.3 million people were forcibly displaced by the end of 2023, with climate-related disasters significantly contributing to this figure. For many, migration represents either a last-resort adaptation strategy or a response to worsening environmental and socioeconomic conditions. These movements highlight the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address the complex interplay between climate change and human mobility. Despite these numbers, both policymakers, institutional practitioners, and scientists still grapple with this new dynamic, even to the extent of debating under which 'analytical' and 'legal' category these displaced individuals would then fall, henceforth. The following quotation in recent academic literature poignantly highlights this contentious matter, cited here to foreground what remains not only a very complex topic (climate mobility) but equally a practical and theoretical nexus that is very much in flux, even during the compilation of this report:

> *"The climate refugee is an enormously controversial and disruptive figure, in both the political and theoretical landscapes. I have attended conferences where international legal scholars sigh and leave the room if anyone even mentions them, muttering that 'there is no such thing'. At the political level the numbers of people displaced by climate events now and in the future are so large that it is recognised as one of the major challenges facing the international community, but there is little agreement about how to respond to it. Proposals include reform of the 1951 Refugee Convention to cover climate-displaced people, or that there should be a distinct legal category of the climate refugee separate from the Convention. Others have argued that both moves would be a mistake because nation states will not accept new legal obligations, especially if the predictions of how many people would qualify for them are right, and that the way forward is through 'soft law' strategies which rely on the good will of those states"* (COLE, 2022, p. 108)[10].

Climate mobility in SIDS is not just an environmental or economic issue—it is deeply sociopolitical, shaped by historical inequalities and regional power structures. STTC offers an alternative to Northern-dominated climate governance, enabling SIDS to develop context-

[8] IEP/Institute for Economics & Peace (2020). Threat Register (ETR) Report. Press Release.
[9] UNHCR (2024). Mid-Year Trends 2024. https://www.unhcr.org/mid-year-trends-report-2024.
[10] COLE, P. (2022). The climate refugee is an enormously controversial and disruptive figure, in both the political and theoretical landscapes. Edinburgh University Press Ltd. 2022.

specific mobility frameworks through peer learning and regional solidarity. However, migration as adaptation is not a neutral process. It risks deepening labour precarity and economic dependence if just transition principles are not upheld. SSTC must go beyond policy exchange to ensure legal protections, social safety nets, and equitable labour conditions for climate-displaced workers. The SSTC's strength lies in its ability to shift agency back to climate-affected nations, fostering regional governance mechanisms that uphold mobility as a choice—not an imposed necessity.

ILO's added value on the matter

While many individuals are displaced or migrate internally—often from rural to more urbanized areas—limited access to adequate local job opportunities can push some to seek opportunities across borders. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), international migrant workers accounted for approximately 4.9% of the global workforce, with a significant majority (66.2%) employed in the services sector. They are also represented at 26.7% in the industry sector and 7.1% in agriculture. Consequently, these workers are heavily concentrated in sectors that are notably impacted by climate change (ILO, 2021)[11].

On one hand, institutional frameworks and uncoordinated policies often leave migrant workers unprotected and hinder recovery in affected regions. On the other hand, well-managed migration aligned with global labour standards can develop skill sets, protect workers, and foster economic and cultural ties between origin and destination communities. Conversely, climate action is creating opportunities in key sectors (energy, transport, waste management, recycling, agriculture, fishing, forestry) requiring innovation and new skills. As labour markets evolve, aligning workforce capabilities with industry needs will be key, particularly in green and blue economies, where some countries are already introducing adaptive labour schemes (IOM, 2023)[12]. To accommodate these changing conditions, some countries have already implemented such international labour migration programs.

Hence, there is an urgent need to address the climate change-migration nexus from a just transition perspective, in line with the ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies[13]. In the realms of human movement in the context of climate change, a just transition means promoting a green economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned—workers, enterprises and communities—not least by creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind (ILO,

[11] ILO (2021). ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers – Results and Methodology – Third edition International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2021.
[12] IOM (2023). The Impact of Climate Change on Labour Migration: Exchanging Practices and Exploring Opportunities for Sustainable Development, Decent Work and a Just Labour Market Transition.
[13] ILO (2015). Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.

2023: p.12)[14]. A just transition equally involves maximizing the social and economic opportunities of climate and environmental action, while minimizing and carefully managing any challenges, including through effective social dialogue and stakeholder engagement on the local level with due respect for fundamental principles and rights at work. ILO strategies aims to prevent climate-change induced mobility and to ensure that migration is not an incapacitating obligation in such situations but rather an option with more sustainable downstream options in terms of household subsistence opportunities and dignified lives.

Labour mobility and adaptation policies that prioritize people and uphold human rights can play a vital role in strengthening resilience, promoting development, and minimizing the risk of future displacement. However, these benefits can be undermined if migrant workers are subjected to exploitative practices, denied basic labour rights, lack sufficient social protection, or are excluded from social dialogue. By leveraging its expertise, organizations like the ILO can help ensure that migrant workers are safeguarded from labour exploitation, enjoy fundamental labour rights, access adequate social protection in the destination country, and actively participate in social dialogue mechanisms that ultimately benefit all workers and stakeholders on site. Such efforts contribute to advancing decent work and fostering sustainable, inclusive development, particularly in industrialized and least industrialized countries across the Global South.

Over the years, there is a strong advocacy for integrating migration into National Adaptation Plans to climate change where both community stabilization and migration facilitation are essential stages of such processes. Indeed, facilitating migration requires more medium to long-term strategies that may include fostering labour migration programs; creating incentives to remittances; and seeking diaspora contributions to adaptation strategies. For instance, ILO has been advocating for 1) skills enhancement of workers in green jobs and green entrepreneurship as key initiatives that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality, and for 2) the promotion of just transition principles towards greener, more resilient and climate-neutral economies and societies.

SIDS-SIDS Cooperation initiatives spanning from 2018 to 2023, led by the ILO, focused on enhancing the resilience of the Pacific SIDS to climate change and disasters. In the initial years, efforts were concentrated on capacity building through seminars and workshops, promoting entrepreneurship related to climate resilience, and preparing project proposals for the Green Climate Fund. The initiatives showcased successful practices at the Global South-South Expo in New York and emphasized the importance of peer learning and cooperation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in the context of climate change and decent work.

[14] ILO (2023). Achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all International Labour Conference 111th Session.

Moving into 2020-2023, the initiatives expanded to address climate-induced mobility and human security in the Pacific region. The Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) Programme aimed to protect and empower communities affected by climate change-related migration, while another initiative focused on the collaborative development of educational resources to promote South-South Cooperation among SIDS. The latter sought to enhance capacity and collaboration in areas such as labour mobility, skills development, and youth employment within the context of climate change and the transition to a green economy.

ILO flick, Fiji

Additionally, the 2022-2023 phase introduced an interregional exchange on trade union engagement, fostering cooperation between Asia-Pacific and Caribbean small island states to share knowledge, experiences, and good practices in developing and implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs). This initiative aimed to embed decent work priorities, promote inclusive growth, and provide a platform for social dialogue among tripartite social partners in these regions

Rationale and Urgency

The Kyoto Protocol, launched in 1997 and enforced in 2005, was the first global climate treaty, setting emission monitoring standards. However, it failed to engage major developing emitters like China and India, and the U.S. never ratified it. Despite this, the Kyoto Protocol remains an important benchmark in terms of emerging practices in climate policy, especially for developing SIDS given that it has squarely put their concerns on institutional agendas for international development and humanitarian affairs. The 2015 Paris Agreement[15] replaced the Kyoto Protocol as the main global climate regulation, aiming to limit warming to below 2.0°C, ideally 1.5°C[16].

Since early 2025, the 197 states of the United Nations have all endorsed the agreement, with 195[17] formally approving it and, therefore, becoming legally binded to submit and update their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) every five years and also report on greenhouse gas emissions. Significantly, the United States withdrew from the treaty during the first administration of President Donald Trump, the only country to do so. The same happened in 2025, during his second administration, with President Trump immediately cancelling former President Joe Biden's earlier reentry to the agreement. As the current emissions pledges fail to meet the targets reached by the Paris Agreement, a just transition approach that covers social protection, inclusive policies, and economic diversification is needed, especially in countries from the global South as the transitional migratory movements occur particularly within the SIDS and other developing nations, that could benefit from a South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)[18] partnership to address such challenges.

fundamentally, South-South and Triangular Cooperation could become an exponential catalyst for collective action, allowing the Pacific and Caribbean regions to navigate the complex intersection of just transition, climate change, and migration with shared insight and strengthened capacities. This type of cooperation enables skill-building, technology transfer, and capacity development through study visits, knowledge-sharing platforms, and interregional initiatives, fostering self-sufficiency and stronger ties among partners. SSTC also capitalizes on the comparative advantage of proximity—cultural, economic, and social—making solutions more adaptable and cost-effective. For the ILO, SSTC complements its Decent Work Agenda by engaging governments, employers, and workers in a tripartite framework that enhances capacity, mobilizes resources, and facilitates consensus building. Through SSTC, innovative responses to global challenges are emerging, empowering countries to design and replicate sustainable, inclusive solutions that advance socioeconomic development.

[15] https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf
[16] UNEP (2023). UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2023.
[17] Among the UNFCCC Parties, Iran, Libya and Yemen have not ratified the Paris Agreement.
[18] ILO (n/d). South-south and Triangular Cooperation for Decent Work a Peer-learning Guide.

Moving forward, SIDS have consistently emphasized the existential threats posed by climate change, human mobility, and the need for a just transition, promoting South-South cooperation in international forums, such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) [19] promoted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which entered into force in 1994 and counts with 198 ratifying countries. Preventing "dangerous" human interference with the climate system is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC[20].

During COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan in November 2024, SIDS leaders called for increased climate finance and adherence to the Paris Agreement to support their resilience efforts. Similarly, at SIDS4 in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda in May 2024, discussions focused on phasing out fossil fuels while ensuring economic sustainability through South-South partnerships. The adoption of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) during the conference marked a key milestone, outlining a 10-year strategy to address climate change, economic diversification, and access to development assistance.

On human mobility, SIDS have actively participated in regional discussions to integrate climate-induced mobility into policy frameworks. The First Regional Conference on Human Mobility and Climate Change in Bogotá, Colombia in November 2023 brought together 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries to develop strategies for managing climate migration. These discussions built on past engagements, such as COP23 held in Bonn, Germany in 2017, where SIDS advocated for climate justice through sustainable agriculture, skills development, and human rights-based approaches to climate action.

The Pacific and Caribbean regions share vulnerabilities to climate change, including rising sea levels, extreme weather, and ecological disruptions, which drive both internal and cross-border movements. The two regions have valuable experiences, both positive and negative, regarding climate-induced mobility (displacement, migration and planned relocation). Collaborative efforts can facilitate the exchange of knowledge, technologies, and best practices in implementing human and labour mobility policies that align with the just transition principles. By leveraging their respective experiences and lessons learned, the Pacific and Caribbean regions can jointly develop tailored solutions that address the specific socio-economic and environmental nuances of their communities. Recent years have seen a growing number of concrete bilateral partnerships among sovereign SIDS, reflecting an increasing commitment to regional solidarity, mutual technical assistance, and policy experimentation grounded in shared realities. For instances in 2025, Nauru and Kiribati signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen aviation cooperation, with a focus on connectivity, safety, and regional infrastructure development.

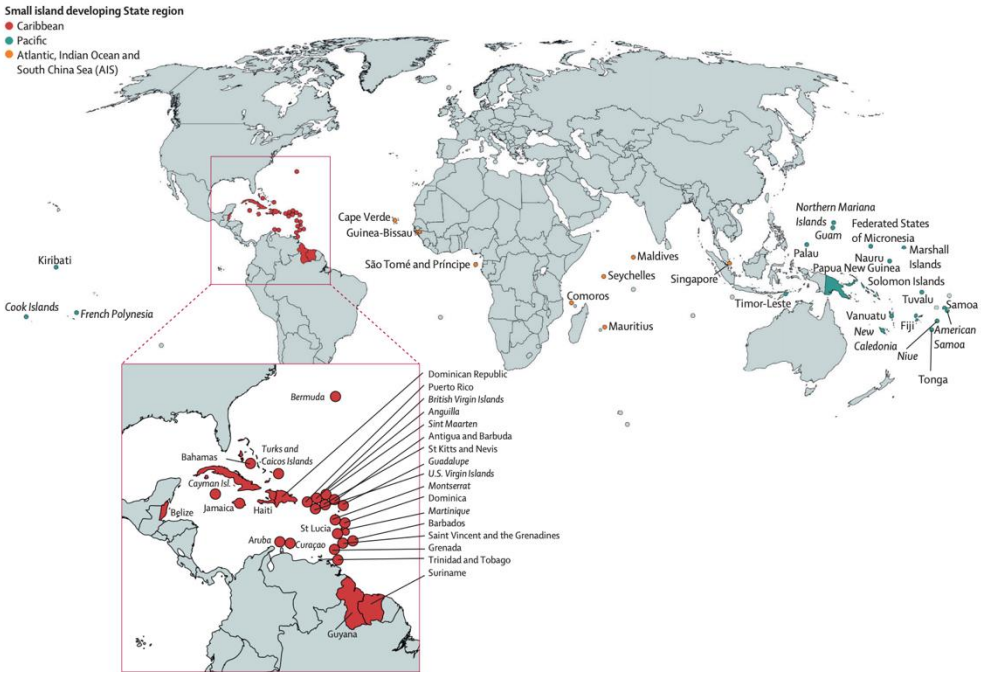
[19] https://unfccc.int/process/bodies/supreme-bodies/conference-of-the-parties-cop
[20] https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/what-is-the-united-nations-framework-convention-on-climate-change

Additionally, this interregional collaboration enhances self-sufficiency while reducing dependency on Northern-led solutions. In this way, SSTC is also a vehicle for structural change, empowering climate-affected nations to develop sovereign, equitable, and sustainable mobility frameworks in alignment with just transition principles.

About the Small Island Developing States

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)[21], are a unique group of 39 States and 18 Associate Members of United Nations regional commissions facing significant challenges due to their geography, size, and resource limitations and are located across three broad regions: the Caribbean, the Pacific, and the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, and South China Sea (AIS). These islands often face high costs for imports and exports, limited resource bases, and are vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. Their exclusive economic zones (EEZs) are crucial for natural resources, but these are threatened by overexploitation and climate change impacts. Biodiversity loss poses not only a risk to their economies and livelihoods, highly dependent on tourism and fisheries sectors, but also to their national identities as biodiversity holds aesthetic and spiritual value for many island communities. At the regional level, SIDS are also supported by inter-governmental organisations, primarily the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC).

Figure 3 - Map of Small Island Developing States by region



Source: GUELL, C. *et al*. (2024)[22]

[21] UN-OHRLLS. Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States UN-OHRLLS. https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/about-small-island-developing-states

[22] GUELL, C. *et al*.(2024). Small Island Developing States: addressing the intersecting challenges of non-communicable diseases, food insecurity, and climate change. The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology, Volume 12, Issue 6, 422 – 432.

SIDS are generally characterized by a small overall land area with a high ratio of coastline and with small populations. In 2019, 71 million people were estimated to live it these countries with a low average population growth of 0.91% per year in 2015-2020 period (UN DESA, 2019)[23]. As pointed out in the Groundswell Report (World Bank, 2021)[24], SIDS are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which is threatening their development gains. Sea-level rise, increased frequency and intensity of storms, and changes in temperature and precipitation are putting stress on their ecosystems, livelihoods, and economies. More than 60% of the countries with the highest losses from disaster events in the world are SIDS.

Seven SIDS countries were among the top 10 countries in the 2020 World Risk Index, which measures the risk of disasters arising directly from natural hazards: Vanuatu, Tonga, Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Solomon Islands, Guyana, and Papua New Guinea[25]. To address these challenges, SIDS are proactively integrating climate resilience and mobility into their development strategies. This includes building resilience, implementing national policy frameworks, and exploring options for migration and relocation meanwhile conducting a strong advocacy work of integrating climate resilience and mobility into regional and global dialogues.

Climate Change and human mobility in the Caribbean and the Pacific

As explained before, this report covers the initiatives conducted by SIDS of the Caribbean[26] and the Pacific[27] regions in dealing with climate change-induced mobility. Both Caribbean and Pacific SIDS face unique challenges due to their small size, isolation, and vulnerability to natural disasters. However, there are notable differences between the two regions. Pacific SIDS are generally more remote, which has implications for trade, investment, and tourism. They also boast higher levels of biodiversity, particularly in terms of marine ecosystems. On the other hand, Caribbean SIDS tend to have larger populations and more developed tourism industries. Both regions are highly vulnerable to sea-level rise, but the Pacific SIDS may face more severe impacts due to their lower elevation and exposure to more frequent and intense tropical cyclones.

They both face significant threats from climate change, sharing common vulnerabilities. Sea-level rise poses a major (and costly) threat to coastal infrastructure and ecosystems in both regions. Extreme weather events, such as hurricanes and typhoons, are becoming more frequent

[23] UN DESA (2019). World Population Prospects 2019. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.
[24] World Bank (2021). Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration. Washington D.C.: World Bank.
[25] Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and IFHV (2020). World Risk Report 2020 Focus: Forced Displacement and Migration. Berlin: 2020.
[26] The 16 SIDS of the Caribbean region are: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.
[27] The 20 SIDS of the Paific region are: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

and intense, causing widespread damage and displacement. Ocean warming and acidification are affecting marine ecosystems, particularly coral reefs, which are crucial for both tourism and fisheries. Additionally, both regions are experiencing water scarcity issues due to changing rainfall patterns and increased evaporation.

The Caribbean is more vulnerable to hurricanes, which can cause significant damage to infrastructure and livelihoods. While the Pacific is particularly susceptible to the impacts of El Niño events, which can lead to droughts, floods, and extreme weather events. Although the Pacific Ocean is generally warming at a slower rate than the Atlantic, the Pacific's coral reefs are more threatened by ocean warming and acidification. Furthermore, some areas in the Caribbean may experience increased rainfall, while others may face drought. In the Pacific, rainfall patterns are more complex, with some islands experiencing more frequent and intense rainfall events, while others may face prolonged dry periods.

When it comes to human displacement, the Caribbean and the Pacific SIDS experience similar patterns of mobility, driven by a variety of factors, including economic opportunities, education, and natural disasters. Rural-urban migration is a common trend in both regions, as people move from rural areas to urban centers in search of better jobs and services. Additionally, both regions experience significant international migration, with many individuals emigrating to industrialized countries for work or study. In the Caribbean, historical factors such as colonialism and slavery have shaped migration patterns, with many Caribbean people migrating to other parts of the Americas and Europe. The Caribbean diaspora, for instance, is well-established in countries like the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

In contrast, the Pacific SIDS have a more complex migration history, influenced by factors such as geographical isolation, cultural traditions, and environmental constraints. While some Pacific Islanders have migrated to other countries, particularly Australia and New Zealand, many prefer to migrate within the region, often moving between islands in search of work or education. This intra-regional migration is facilitated by historical cultural ties and shared languages and customs. Additionally, ninety-five per cent of island nations in the Pacific have upheld various forms of customary ownership of land, thus adapting as communities to their changing environment through Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK), that is, customary practices and beliefs that center on notions of interconnectedness between human populations and their environments, known as ‘ridge-to-reef’ frameworks (CAMPBELL, 2012)[28].

Furthermore, the impact of climate change on migration patterns may differ between the two regions. The Caribbean, with its numerous small islands, may be more vulnerable to sea-level rise and extreme weather events, which could lead to increased displacement. The Pacific additionally faces unique challenges related to climate change, such as ocean acidification, coral

[28] Campbell, J. R. (2015). The implications of climate change for the loss and damage caused by disruption of the essential link between people and their land. UNFCCC.

bleaching and drought which can impact livelihoods and food security. Many countries in the Pacific region hold a low comparative human development index while at the same time a high exposure (or increasingly vulnerability) to severe droughts.

For instance, Vanuatu is of concern in this respect given the importance of the agricultural sector on site, and the large proportion of the total employment related thereto, 70%. This signals how even with food assistance; a novel dependency would be created given that large swathes of the population would not only lose their ability to generate food sources but equally their employment outlook and ways to generate a source of income (needed for more than the purchase of foodstuffs). In concrete terms, and immediately highlighting the severity of the matter, this implies that 78,400 people in Vanuatu are at risk of a disrupted source of labour income during the advent of exacerbating droughts. Moreover, across the Pacific SIDS in particular, this figure is projected to rise to a population of 1.19 million people in a highly vulnerable position to lose their labour and sources of income (ESCAP, 2020)[29].

Within the American continent, the Caribbean region is comprised of 16 SIDS – some of which are part of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM)[30]. This region is known for high emigration from the islands to other parts of the continent. Nearly one-fifth of the region's nationals lived outside of their countries / territories of origin as of 2020 (UN DESA, 2020)[31]. In proportional terms, 10 of the top 20 countries of emigration in the world in 2019 (in countries where the combined population of residents and emigrants residing abroad exceeded 100,000) were in the Caribbean (IOM, 2019b)[32], totaling 9.08 million emigrants living abroad. This phenomenon is largely facilitated through professional recruitment programs for individuals with technical expertise in certain professions (as well as family-related migration in the wake thereof).

The CARICOM through its Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME)[33] initiative promotes since 2001 the short-term free movement of CARICOM nationals in specific professional categories in any of the member states. Currently under the CSME, just a few skills are recognized, and an often-complex process is required to receive and verify a skills certificate. However, there are also significant and growing intra-regional migration dynamics to destinations with higher incomes. In 2020, there was a total of 859,403 intra-regional and 745,700 extra-regional immigrants in the Caribbean region. The intra-regional share of immigrants has

[29] ESCAP (2020). The Disaster Riskscape across the Pacific Small Island Developing States: Key Takeaways for Stakeholders. ST/ESCAP/2880. https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/IDD-APDR-Subreport-Pacific-SIDS.pdf

[30] Established in 1973 and it has operated under the framework of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas since 2001 Members States: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. Associated Members: Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Observers: Aruba, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela. See: https://caricom.org/member-states-and-associate-members/

[31] UN DESA (2020). 2020 World Population Prospects 2019 – Total Population, as of 1 January (thousands). New York City. World

[32] IOM (2019b). World Migration Report 2020 (eds. M. McAuliffe and B. Khadria). Geneva.

[33] CSME aims at integrating member-states into a single economic unit with the goal to promote free movement of capital, services, technology and skilled professionals within the region. Participants*:* Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kits and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

grown over the years, increasing from 46% in 2000 to 56% in 2020 (LACARTE, V. *et al*., 2023)[34]. In March 2024, a new agreement started allowing the free movement of people between countries of the CSME targeting climate and labour mobility within the CARICOM. Additionally, it will allow access to health and educational services on equal footing as nationals.

Nevertheless, available data indicate that labour migration mechanisms in the Caribbean region have not accomplished the desired effects yet for governing labour migration and mobility flows, as more workers use alternative or irregular means for working abroad than the formal mechanisms in place. Additionally, experts have expressed concerns that the frequency and impact of climate-related events are only likely to grow in the years to come and may reduce livelihood opportunities within countries of origin, which entails individuals and households to seek better opportunities abroad. The challenge remains to fully incorporate protective measures for workers and to ensure that these regional mechanisms can better respond to the changing environmental context.

The Pacific Islands are extremely vulnerable to climate change, with the atoll nations being particularly exposed to rising sea levels and other climate change-related natural disasters such as tropical cyclones. Although Pacific islanders are usually very connected to their land due to identity and cultural values, migration flows for economic purposes—temporarily and seasonal can be observed. While it remains difficult to quantify the number of people on the move across the Pacific region, let alone in the specific context of climate change, an approximate number of 340,000 Pacific-born people now reside overseas. This population has not been studied to the extent of revealing their disaggregated motivations. Complicating this data further is that many Pacific workers are seafarers by tradition of profession, meaning that their professional orientation already makes such statistics harder to crunch for their conclusive implications. Of this total number, around 20 per cent now reside in other Pacific countries (with Fiji and Vanuatu marked as important destinations) while the remaining majority has taken up residence in New Zealand, Australia, or other (industrialized) countries entirely outside of the region. These movements are increasingly seen as climate adaptation strategies, providing economic benefits and contributing to skill development.

The Pacific Island Forum[35] (PIF) differs from CARICOM as it prioritizes political and security cooperation over economic integration. While PIF does engage in regional economic cooperation, its primary focus lies in addressing broader regional challenges like climate change and disaster response. Nevertheless, a Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility has been formally endorsed in November 2023 by Pacific Islands Forum members and thus exemplifies a concrete initiative in terms of South-South Cooperation. The aim of the regional framework is to

[34] Migration Policy Institute (2023). Migration, Integration, and Diaspora Engagement in the Caribbean. A Policy Review.
[35] Founded in 1971, it comprises 18 members: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. See: https://forumsec.org/pacific-islands-forum.

establish greater policy coherence and coordination of regional mobility strategies—pre-requisites for managing the process of just transition that are heavily emphasised in the ILO Guidelines. The suggested purpose thereof is "*to guide Pacific Islands Forum governments, communities, non-state actors and partners in ensuring rights based and people-centred movement in the context of climate change, including staying in place, planned relocation, migration, and displacement through a proactive, inclusive and collaborative regional approach that reflects common Pacific interests in a culturally appropriate manner, while respecting national sovereignty and diversity*" (PIFS, 2022)[36].

The above Framework is intended to be a resource for safeguarding the future of all Pacific peoples in the face of climate change. As the impacts of climate change continue to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and challenges, Pacific communities are courageously positioning themselves for the challenges that lie ahead. Recent bilateral cooperation further reflects this regional agency. In 2025, Nauru and Kiribati signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance aviation safety and connectivity—demonstrating how Pacific SIDS are proactively strengthening intra-island infrastructure to support adaptation goals.

By providing a coordinated and collaborative approach to migration and human security, the Framework has the potential to improve the resilience and wellbeing of Pacific communities. Through increased mobility and cooperation between countries, the Framework can help ensure that those affected by climate change have access to the support they need to adapt and thrive. In this regard, the Framework represents a significant South-South investment in the Pacific region, one that has the potential to make a meaningful and positive impact on the lives of all people in the Pacific (PIFS, *ibid*).

Furthermore, the Article 18 of the Regional Framework on Climate Mobility in the Pacific[37] (PIF, 2023) now also foregrounds not only the potential of 'moving with dignity' (as pioneered by Kiribati), but equally of 'staying in place with dignity' (voluntary immobility):

> "*We recognise the desire of Pacific people to continue to live in their own countries where possible and our people's deep, ancestral connections to land and sea. For Pacific people, loss of land is not just about loss of place; it impacts the foundations of our individual and collective identities and well-being, and may threaten our customary practices and traditions, and complicate our ability to respond to climate change and related hazards and disasters. Helping our people stay in their homes with safety and dignity is a fundamental priority for the Pacific*".

[36] Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (2022). 2023 Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility. See: https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Pacific%20Regional%20Framework%20on%20Climate%20Mobility.pdf.
[37] https://forumsec.org/publications/pacific-regional-framework-climate-mobility

In fact, some of these newly emerging policy practices and narratives appear to be based on shifting aspirations of the local populations, which will inevitably also influence policymaking in the time to come in the larger region at hand. This report will draw on some of these latest developments and insights, thus fully exploring a topic and nexus (climate & human mobility) that remains in flux, both in terms of yet emerging practices on the ground as well as with respect to the disparate literature reporting on these matters.

The Caribbean and Pacific SIDS are experiencing climate-induced mobility in distinct yet interconnected ways, shaped by historical, economic, and geopolitical factors. While migration and displacement are often framed as inevitable consequences of climate change, a sociological lens highlights the agency of communities in navigating these challenges and the role of regional cooperation mechanisms in shaping mobility outcomes.

One of the key differences between the two regions lies in migration pathways and governance structures. The Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) under CARICOM has facilitated intra-regional labour mobility, but its effectiveness remains constrained by complex bureaucratic processes and an informal labour market that often bypasses official migration channels. Meanwhile, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) has adopted a more political and security-driven approach, culminating in the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility (2023). This framework explicitly recognizes both migration and voluntary immobility, shifting the discourse toward human rights-based adaptation strategies rather than forced displacement.

A critical issue remains economic precarity and labour market disruptions caused by climate change. This raises concerns about structural inequalities, as climate migration is often facilitated by professional recruitment programs targeting skilled workers, leaving low-income and informal sector workers more vulnerable to climate displacement without viable alternatives.

The regional response through SSTC and institutional frameworks is promising but faces challenges. While the new CSME agreement (2024) facilitates climate and labour mobility, it remains to be seen whether it can effectively protect migrant workers' rights and prevent exploitative conditions. Similarly, while the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility establishes an inclusive, sovereignty-respecting approach, its success depends on adequate funding, political commitment, and enforcement mechanisms.

Our work highlights that, climate mobility in the Caribbean and Pacific is not just an environmental or economic issue—it is a social justice challenge that requires equitable migration policies, strong labour protections, and regional solidarity to ensure that mobility remains a choice rather than a necessity.

ETHODOLOGY

Objective

The objective of this report is to **identify and describe emerging practices in climate change, human mobility, and a just transition** with the purpose of systematizing a series of short case studies that can foster South-South collaboration among climate-affected countries that are prone to experiencing internal and cross-border forms of human displacement as to strengthen the capacity of ILO constituents in developing policies and programmes for human mobility in the face of climate change based on exchanges between peers. The document targets SIDS in the Pacific and Caribbean regions but it is also open to incorporate initiatives from other parts of the Global South (e.g., in Africa) given that it may inspire SIDS stakeholders in terms of emerging practices that could be scaled or replicated.

Methodological Approach

As the training arm of the ILO, the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) carries out regular training courses, academies and capacity building projects on labour migration in support of ILO objectives with the aim to strengthen the capacity of key constituents involved in migration policies. Under the framework of the "South-South collaboration on Climate Change, Human Mobility and the Just Transition" initiative, funded by the ILO PARTNERSHIPS Unit, ITCILO launched in 2024 the "E-learning course on the labour dimensions of climate change and human mobility: Rights-based responses to climate-induced mobility" module, which will use the content of this preliminary report (working document-in-progress), especially the emerging practices identified across a number of iconic cases, as working tools for upcoming training editions.

Growing from the cumulative knowledge of the ITCILO from previous projects such as EU-MIA[38] and FORWORK[39] that explored terminologies such as 'best practices' and 'functioning practices', **Emerging Practices** are here referred to as being "innovative and evolving approaches, policies and strategies that aim to address the complex and interconnected challenges posed by climate change, human mobility, and a just transition, while themselves are shaping the field of study". Such practices often arise from new technologies, changing social and cultural contexts, or interdisciplinary collaborations. These emerging practices are constantly evolving as new knowledge and experiences emerge and are promising avenues for addressing the challenges of climate change, human mobility, and a just transition.

[38] See: https://www.itcilo.org/projects/european-migrant-integration-academy-eu-mia
[39] https://www.itcilo.org/resources/forwork

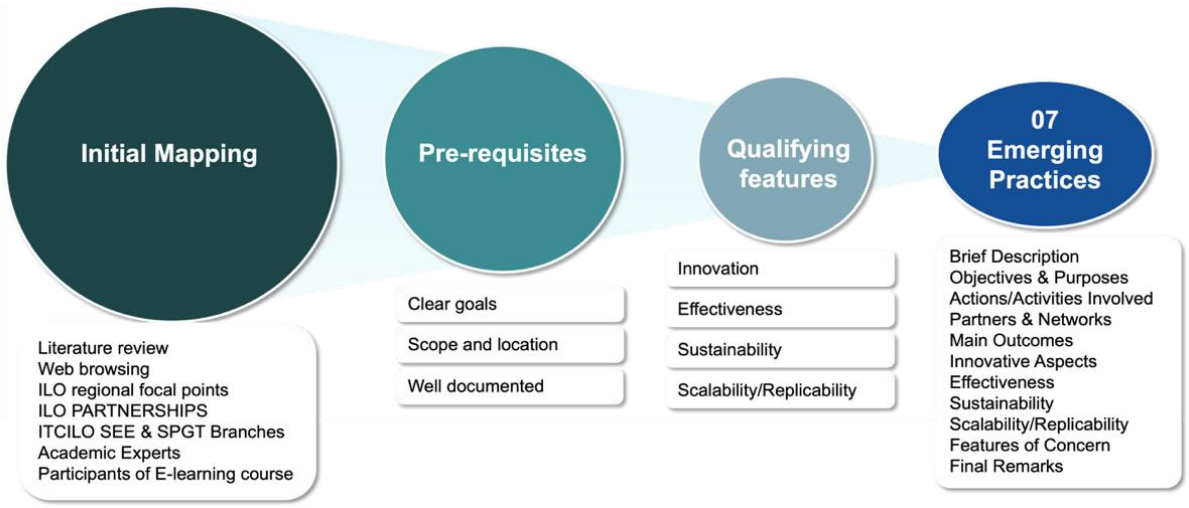
Expert interviews were conducted with ILO focal points on labour mobility and/or climate change from the ILO Regional Office from Latin America and the Caribbean, and the ILO Regional Office from Asia and the Pacific, as well as consultation with expert academicians. The methodology was reviewed with the ILO Multilateral Partnerships and Development Department (PARTNERSHIPS) in charge of South-South and Triangular Cooperation area, and the ITCILO focal points of the Sustainable Enterprises and Economies (SEE Unit) and the Labour Migration cluster in the (SPGT Unit). Participants from the 2024 edition of the E-learning course on the Labour Dimension of Climate Change and Human Mobility: Rights-based responses to climate-induced mobility[40] also had a chance to provide inputs to the methodology.

The cases studies selected are the result of a broad desk review and analysis of existing data sources and pertinent reports around the globe, with a special focus on the geographic regions of the Caribbean and the Pacific, and thematic fields of SIDS. The mapping of potential cases identified approximately 20 initiatives that presented the following aspects: a) clear goals related to climate change-migration nexus; b) preferably, carried out in SIDS countries (at regional, national or local level) or in other parts of the globe; c) well documented cases, as the inputs needed to come from the desk research due to the scope of the report. Additionally, four qualifying features expected in a South-South Triangular Cooperation[41] approach were also used in the final selection of the cases, such as: Innovation, Effectiveness, Sustainability, Scalability/Replicability. It is worth noting that information was overall scarce, scattered or yet being produced (both in terms of instutitional as well as academic reporting), rendering the compilation of in-depth case studies difficult.

Figure 4 – Overview of Methodological Approach

[40] See *Annex I* for reference of the PPT presentation delivered.

[41] ILO (2014). How-to guide on South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Decent Work. International Labour Office, Department of Partnerships and Field Support. - Geneva: ILO, 2014.



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Overview of the Selected Emerging Practices (EP)

Each of the 07 emerging practices selected offers unique insights into emerging practices in climate change, mobility, and a just transition. The Tuvalu-Australia Falepili Union Treaty and the IGAD MDCC Project highlights innovative approaches to migration, some of which could be inspirational to South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives in the near future, while Fiji's Planned Relocation Guidelines and Vanuatu's National Policy provide models for managing displacement in a rights-based manner. The Pacific Regional Framework and CDEMA emphasizes the importance of regional cooperation in the format of emerging in terms of climate-related mobility, while the Repeal of the Barbuda Land Act serves as a cautionary tale on the risks of prioritizing (foreign) economic interests over local rights. A strong example is the response to the 2021 La Soufrière eruption, when Barbados extended immediate assistance to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, including the reception of evacuees. This act of solidarity illustrates the depth of Caribbean SIDS cooperation in moments of acute environmental disruption. Together, these case studies provide a comprehensive foundation for fostering collaboration and developing policies for human mobility in the face of climate change. Below there is a summary of each one of them for an initial reference.

It is important, however, to note that this report does not *per se* seek to actively pair the emerging practices selected with explicit pathways (ideationally pre-supposed). Rather, it adheres to a holistic approach that foregrounds the case itself, even if this causes 'categorical friction' along a grid that has emerged from policymaking as well as still embryonic (early-stage) scientific research about a complex thematic nexus. Nevertheless, in some way or form, and to varying degrees, the cases covered in this report speak to the pathways brought by the Cancun

Agreement (displacement, migration and planned relocation) while offering unique insights into emerging practices in climate change, mobility, and a just transition.

Table 1 – Overview of Selected Cases

#	NAME OF THE EMERGING PRACTICE (EP)	MAIN PATTERN	REGION
EP 1	**Fiji** & Planned Relocation Guidelines	Planned Relocation	PACIFIC
EP 2	**Vanuatu** National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement	Displacement	
EP 3	**Pacific Regional Framework** on Climate Mobility	Planned Relocation	
EP 4	The Repeal of the **Barbuda** Land Act	Displacement	CARIBBEAN
EP 5	**Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency**	Displacement	
EP 6	**IGAD MDCC Project**	Migration	OTHERS
EP 7	Tuvalu & **The Falepili Union Treaty**	Migration	PACIFIC

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

EP 1. Fiji & Planned Relocation Guidelines

Brief Description

Fiji, an archipelago in the South Pacific, is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, including sea-level rise, cyclones, and coastal erosion. Over 80% of Fiji's population lives in coastal areas, making them particularly susceptible to displacement. The country's reliance on subsistence agriculture and fisheries further exacerbates the socio-economic impacts of climate-induced displacement. Fiji's planned relocation approach is rooted in its cultural and traditional values, particularly the anthropological concept of 'vanua' (land, people, and culture), which emphasizes the fundamental interconnectedness between the people and their environment. Fiji's approach to planned relocation has evolved over decades, influenced by historical relocations and the growing recognition of climate change as a driver of displacement. The development of the Planned Relocation Guidelines[42] (2018) and Displacement Guidelines[43] (2019) was informed by extensive consultations with local communities, government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international organizations. These frameworks

[42] https://www.adaptationcommunity.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Planned-Relocation-Guideline-Fiji-2018.pdf
[43] https://fijiclimatechangeportal.gov.fj/ppss/displacement-guidelines-in-the-context-of-climate-change-and-disasters/

ensure that relocation is a measure of last resort and is conducted with safeguards to protect the rights and livelihoods of affected populations.

Objectives & Purposes

- The primary objectives of Fiji's planned relocation approach are:
- To protect communities from the immediate and long-term impacts of climate change.
- To ensure that relocations are conducted in a manner that respects human rights, cultural heritage, and community dignity.
- To integrate climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction into national development planning.
- To establish sustainable financing mechanisms for relocation efforts.

Actions/Activities Involved

Fiji's planned relocation process involves several key activities, including:

- Engage affected communities in decision-making processes to ensure their needs and preferences are addressed.
- Identify suitable relocation sites (further inland) and ensuring they are equipped with necessary infrastructure and services.
- Secure land tenure (access and ownership), at times in consultation with other local communities having to deal with such influxes (retaining suitable cohesion and the mitigation of internal conflicts), and funding for relocation projects, including through innovative financing mechanisms.
- Assess the outcomes of relocations to inform future efforts and improve practices.

Partners & Networks

Fiji's planned relocation efforts involve cooperation among a wide range of stakeholders, including: the Government of Fiji, International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), affected communities, traditional leaders, and civil society organizations.

Main Outcomes/Outputs

- Fiji's planned relocation initiatives have achieved several key outcomes, including:
- Successful relocations of communities such as Vunidogoloa and Kenani, which have improved overall living conditions and reduced vulnerability to climate impacts.
- Development of comprehensive guidelines and frameworks that serve as models for other countries.
- Enhanced capacity for climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction at the national and community levels.

Innovative Aspects

- Fiji's approach to planned relocation is innovative in several ways:
- The development of Planned Relocation Guidelines (2018) and Displacement Guidelines (2019), which provide a structured and rights-based framework for relocations.
- The use of community-led processes to ensure that relocations are participatory and inclusive.
- The establishment of a National Planned Relocation Framework and associated financing mechanisms, which provide a sustainable model for future relocations, as well as a template for policy inspiration for South-South Cooperation in the region and beyond, no least in the SIDS context.

Effectiveness

Fiji's planned relocation initiatives have been effective in protecting vulnerable communities and reducing climate risks. The successful relocation of Vunidogoloa and Kenani villages demonstrates the potential of well-planned and community-led relocations. The key in these efforts was to plan ahead and be aware of the importance of catering to the sustainability of livelihoods, thus going beyond the surface of relocation efforts only.

Sustainability

The sustainability of Fiji's planned relocation efforts depends on securing long-term funding and ensuring that relocated communities have access to livelihoods, services, and infrastructure. The integration of relocation efforts into national development plans and the establishment of financing mechanisms enhance sustainability, a key feature which renders them suitable as an ideal source of inspiration for regional South-South Cooperation.

Scalability/Replicability

Fiji's planned relocation model is highly replicable as long as the approach is tailored to the specific cultural, political, and environmental contexts of other climate-vulnerable regions. Its emphasis on community participation, human rights, and sustainable development offers valuable lessons for global climate adaptation efforts. Hence, such an approach requires careful planning and step-wise (consultative) management based on close communication (feedback cycles, two-way communication) rather than only top-down delegation, and thus informed policy making; all to avoid the trap of quick-fix and immediate implementation agendas.

Features of Concern

- Despite its successes, Fiji's planned relocation approach faces several challenges:

- Securing suitable land for relocation is often difficult due to competing land uses (with prior communities based more inland) and complex land tenure systems governing the islands. It requires delicate and timely deliberation with all parties involved, thus necessitating intricate knowledge about local customary laws and traditions.
- Relocation projects require significant funding, which is often limited, at least locally.
- Relocations can disrupt community cohesion and cultural practices, requiring careful and step-wise management.
- Ensuring that relocated communities have access to livelihoods and services remains a persistent challenge, even despite goodwill attempts to attend to this matter *a-priori*.

Final Remarks

Fiji has developed a model that can serve as a blueprint for other countries, especially in the format of South-South Cooperation in the SIDS context. While challenges remain, the approach provides a strong foundation for building resilience and ensuring the rights and dignity of affected populations, not least in terms ensuring sustainable livelihood mechanisms and preventive conflict resolution (social cohesion) in regard of inland communities faced with incoming groups displaced from the coastal areas. Its further success will depend on sustained political will, delicate planning and community consultation, adequate resources, and continued cooperation among all stakeholders.

EP 2. Vanuatu National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement

Brief Description

Vanuatu, a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) in the South Pacific, consists of 83 volcanic islands, with many just a meter above sea level. Around 80% of its 314,653 inhabitants live in rural areas, relying on rich natural resources like forests, fisheries, and coral reefs which are extreme vulnerable to climate change and disasters. Vanuatu ranked as the highest-risk country globally in the 2021 World Risk Report, with an estimated 3,680 people per year at risk of displacement from sudden-onset hazards such as cyclones. Recognized as a regional leader in climate policy, Vanuatu has developed significant state capacities in climate mobility since the 1990s, notably establishing the National Advisory Board (NAB) on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction in 2012. It has also been a strong advocate for international financial responsibility regarding climate-induced loss and damage, having introduced this issue at the UN as early as 1991 on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). This advocacy contributed to the eventual inclusion of Article 8 on loss and damage in the 2015 Paris Agreement. To address climate-induced displacement, Vanuatu adopted in 2018 the National Policy on Climate Change

and Disaster-Induced Displacement[44], aiming to protect displaced persons' rights, prevent economic impoverishment, and ensure sustainable solutions. This pioneering policy is integrated into Vanuatu's People's Plan 2030, which addresses both immediate disaster impacts and slow-onset challenges like sustainable livelihoods post-relocation—an often-overlooked aspect of climate mobility policy. Comparatively, Vanuatu reserves one of the highest budgets in the region for funding Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Its overall budget for climate change-related policies is one of the highest in the world (e.g., 15% of fiscal budget in 2020), feature that could position Vanuatu as a leader in planning and budgeting deliberations in regional South-South cooperation initiatives.

Objectives & Purposes

The primary objectives of the policy are:

- To provide a framework for managing climate and disaster-induced displacement through local (re)integration, planned relocation, and gradual return.
- To protect the rights of displaced persons and minimize economic impoverishment.
- To integrate human mobility considerations into national development planning.
- To ensure that planned relocation is used as a measure of last resort, with safeguards to protect human rights.

Actions/Activities Involved

The policy outlines several key actions, including:

- Support displaced persons to integrate into host communities through access to housing, livelihoods, and services.
- Facilitate the relocation of communities from high-risk areas to safer locations, with safeguards to protect human rights and minimize economic losses.
- Assist displaced persons to return to their homes and rebuild their lives after a disaster.
- Integrate human mobility considerations into national and local development plans to ensure long-term resilience. This sort of long-term planning is an example in terms of climate mobility governance that renders Vanuatu a leader in potential South-South cooperation initiatives, allowing it to share productive strategies in terms of the bureaucratical reorganization of the state in the face of climate-induced changes.

Partners & Networks

[44] https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/press_release/file/iom-vanuatu-policy-climate-change-disaster-induced-displacement-2018.pdf

Several responsible actors exist within the Vanuatu government bureaucracy, some of which are leading ministerial actors, such as the The Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, Environment, Energy and Disaster Management (MoCC) and others sub-units thereto[45]. There is active collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, including the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Pacific Community (SPC), local communities, traditional leaders, and civil society organizations. Vanuatu's main sources for international financial assistance in terms of development aid are the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Global Environment Facility, and the Global Climate Fund (established after the COP28 UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai in 2024). Australia remains Vanuatu's largest donor for climate change assistance, with Japan, China, and New Zealand following suit. As a matter of example, from 2013-2017, Vanuatu received over USD 200 million in climate-related development assistance.

Main Outcomes/Outputs

Vanuatu's policy has achieved several key outcomes, including:

- Enhanced capacity to manage climate and disaster-induced displacement through local (re)integration, planned relocation, and gradual return.
- Strengthened protection of the rights of displaced persons, particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children, and persons with disabilities.
- Improved integration of human mobility considerations into national and local development plans.
- Increased awareness and understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with climate-induced displacement.

Innovative Aspects

The policy is innovative in its comprehensive and long-term approach to managing climate and disaster-induced displacement. It emphasizes the protection of human rights, the planned minimization of economic losses, and the integration of human mobility considerations into development planning. Importantly, the policy advocates for planned relocation as a last-resort measure, ensuring that such relocations are carried out with dignity and include robust safeguards to protect the rights and considerations of affected communities. It also identifies various hazards that threaten Vanuatu and outlines preventive measures, such as strengthening the disaster resilience of infrastructure in vulnerable areas and implementing safeguards to prevent forced evictions. For communities where hazards pose risks too severe for adaptation or mitigation, the policy provides a clear framework for temporary or permanent relocation.

[45] The National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction; The Department of Climate Change (DoCC); The National Disaster Committee (NDC); The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) works closely with the NDC; Provincial Disaster and Climate Change Committees (PDCCCs); Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs).

Effectiveness

Vanuatu's climate and disaster displacement policy has strengthened the country's capacity to manage displacement, but its long-term success depends on sustained resources and stakeholder commitment. Early integration of human mobility into development planning shows promise yet scaling up remains a challenge. While the policy has raised awareness and built capacity, gaps persist in gender-sensitive approaches and inclusive community engagement. For instance, the government has recognized the role of Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) in disaster management, collaborating with NGOs and the Red Cross to establish them across the islands. These community committees facilitate policy dissemination and inclusive participation at the local level, yet their sustainability is in question due to reliance on volunteers and insufficient structural government support.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the policy is closely tied to Vanuatu's ability to secure ongoing funding and technical support, rendering it fragile to a certain extent. The emphasis on integrating human mobility considerations into development plans enhances sustainability, but long-term success will require continued political commitment, sustained diplomatic advocacy on the part of Vanuatu regarding its plights and needs, and considerable international donor support in response thereto. Not to mention the need to build local capacity and ensuring that communities are actively involved in decision-making processes to enhance the policy's sustainability. There is concern about whether the government takes the CDCCCs for granted (rather than as an essential component in its overall strategy) given the little financial resources (of the national level) that have been allocated to CDCCCs, raising issues about their sustainability.

Scalability/Replicability

The policy provides a South-South Cooperation model that can be adapted to other regions facing similar challenges, especially in the context of Pacific and Caribbean SIDS. Its emphasis on protecting human rights, minimizing economic losses, and integrating human mobility considerations into development planning offers valuable lessons for global climate adaptation efforts. However, replicability will require tailoring the approach to the specific cultural, political, and environmental contexts of other regions.

Features of Concern

Despite its achievements, the policy faces several challenges:

- Coordinate activities across multiple stakeholders and sectors is noted as challenging and time-consuming.

- While the government recognizes the importance of CDCCCs, it has not provided adequate or consistent funding and structural support to the financial organization thereof.
- CDCCCs rely largely on NGOs for organization, training, and financial resources, as well as community fundraising.
- There is a need for greater clarity on the accessibility of funds at the provincial level to strengthen coordination between government agencies and community committees.
- The government appears to have shifted much of its financial responsibility for community initiatives to local and international NGOs as well as to local communities themselves (fundraising).
- CDCCCs are treated as passive recipients of policy rather than as equal partners in decision-making, limiting opportunities for meaningful two-way engagement (bottom-up feedback cycles).
- The lack of structural funding and governmental commitment raises concerns about whether the government values the bottom-up efforts of CDCCCs beyond rhetoric and advocacy. These caveats can also serve as highlights or lessons to be learned in deliberations that have to do with knowledge exchange for the purpose of South-South Cooperation and policy development in view of climate mobility.

Final Remarks

Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement is a major step in addressing climate-induced displacement by emphasizing human rights, sustainable development, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. While it provides a strong foundation for resilience and protecting affected populations, challenges remain, particularly in integrating community-level efforts into relevant funding streams to ensure their smooth operation and sustain their activities. Indeed, the government's pioneering policies could be strengthened by taking the role of Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) more seriously, ensuring adequate and consistent funding for their training and operations, which have so far relied on NGOs and local communities. Given their success in disseminating government strategies, greater investment in CDCCCs could enhance risk management and facilitate a two-way communication flow, fostering more inclusive and informed national policymaking, which could thus become a fully-fledged blueprint for knowledge exchange for South-South Cooperation on adequate policy practices in view of climate change and its downstream mobility challenges.

EP 3. Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility

Brief Description

The Pacific region is one of the most vulnerable to climate change, with rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation threatening the livelihoods and habitats of its populations. Small island developing states (SIDS) in the Pacific face unique challenges due to their limited land area, semi-industrialized set up, high population density in coastal zones, and economic dependence on natural resources that are now under threat. Climate-induced migration and displacement are increasingly seen as adaptive strategies, but they also pose significant social, economic, and cultural challenges. The development of the 2023 Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility[46] was informed by years of regional dialogue and thus serves as a key example of South-South Cooperation. Key milestones include the establishment of the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) Programme in 2020, which facilitated multi-stakeholder consultations and technical working groups. Although, not legally binding, it is a groundbreaking initiative designed to address the escalating challenges of climate-induced migration, displacement, and planned relocation in the Pacific.

Endorsed by all 18 Pacific Island Forum (PIF) leaders in 2023, as consultations developed, a whole section was added on "staying in place" as it became the preferential option for many Pacific countries, whereas 'mobility', especially the cross-border one, was seen as a last resort that ought rather to be based on the individual's choice, not as a headline policy on a state level. Another key message is the understanding that the international community, most responsible for emissions, should be held accountable for funding mitigation and adaptation strategies and also for providing for loss and damage. The Framework is both technically and politically relevant because it offers a coherent strategy for addressing the multifaceted challenges of climate mobility in the Pacific. Technically, it provides the tools for data collection, climate resilience strategies, infrastructure planning, and monitoring. Politically, it empowers Pacific Island nations to negotiate for resources, assert sovereignty, and lobby for global recognition of climate migration. Article 43 of the Framework foresees the existence of a "comprehensive implementation and monitoring plan to identify the interlinkages across all core areas and align implementation with existing and emerging national, regional and global processes and mechanisms shall be put in place accordingly". The regional nature of the Framework, its technical feats, as well as its political dimension may very well serve as an example in policymaking for other Global South regions to emulate.

Objectives & Purposes

- Guide governments, communities, non-state actors, and partners in managing climate mobility in the Pacific.

[46] https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Pacific%20Regional%20Framework%20on%20Climate%20Mobility.pdf

- Ensure rights-based and people-centered movement in the context of climate change, including staying in place, planned relocation, migration, and displacement.
- Promote a proactive, inclusive, and collaborative regional approach to climate mobility.
- Reflect common Pacific interests in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Respect national sovereignty and diversity while addressing climate mobility challenges.

Actions/Activities Involved

The Regional Pacific Framework on Climate Change outlines a comprehensive approach to climate mobility through core areas of action. To support Pacific communities in "staying in place", the framework emphasizes regional leadership in limiting global warming, integrating science-based and traditional knowledge to preserve biodiversity, and ensuring equitable access to adaptation resources. "Planned relocation" efforts focus on developing regional guidelines and best practices that uphold human rights, cultural ties, and community participation. "Migration" pathways are strengthened through regional collaboration to facilitate safe and informed mobility while maintaining cultural and family connections. In addressing "displacement", the framework strengthens regional collaboration to ensure safe evacuations, protect internally displaced persons, and explore regional policies for cross-border displacement, including humanitarian admission and longer-term stays. Lastly, for "stranded migrants", it seeks to harmonize policies for humanitarian stays and prioritize family and community cohesion, reflecting the traditional spirit of Pacific solidarity in *Pasifika* culture.

Partners & Networks

The framework involves cooperation among a wide range of stakeholders, including: The International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations, Australia and New Zealand, the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), National governments of Pacific Island countries and local community councils, civil society and Academia.

Main (Expected) Outcomes/Outputs

The framework is expected to achieve several key outcomes, including:

- Enhanced regional coordination and policy coherence on climate mobility.
- Strengthened capacities of governments and communities to manage climate-induced migration and displacement.
- Increased awareness and understanding of the linkages between climate change, disaster management, and human mobility.
- Incorporation of climate-induced mobility considerations taken into account in the National Development Plans.

Innovative Aspects

There's no other climate mobility related framework globally that supersedes this one in political scope and technical relevance, covering all types of movement, including the most recent 'staying in place' dimension. The framework is innovative in its emphasis on human security and multi-stakeholder cooperation. The framework also promotes the use of regional dialogues and technical working groups to share and exchange best practices and lessons learned. It is the first document of its kind and clearly serves as a key example of South- South Cooperation.

Effectiveness

The Framework has been proactive in fostering regional cooperation and policy alignment. However, its long-term success will depend on the availability of resources and the commitment of Pacific Island governments to implement its recommendations. Early capacity-building programs and regional dialogues have shown promise, but scaling up these initiatives remains an open question. The political commitment of the Regional Framework now needs to be translated into an actionable (and legally-binding) regional implementation plan, which may support national-level actions and initiatives on climate mobility or be leveraged by national-level actions through peer-to-peer learning.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the framework is closely tied to the region's ability to secure ongoing funding and technical support, which presents a weakness in terms of medium to long-term action. The emphasis on integrating climate mobility into national development plans surely enhances sustainability, but long-term success will require continued political commitment and secure funding.

Scalability/Replicability

The framework provides a model that can inspire other regions facing similar challenges. Its emphasis on regional cooperation, multi-stakeholder cooperation, and policy coherence offers valuable lessons for global climate mobility governance. However, replicability will require tailoring the framework to the specific cultural, political, and environmental contexts of other regions. For it be replicable, it may also require at least a minimum degree of pre-existing cultural and socio-political alignment and integration between regional states. Whether a similar framework can be established in the Caribbean will thus provide a litmus test for scalability to other SIDS clusters facing similar climate related concerns.

Features of Concern

Despite its achievements, the framework faces several challenges:

- Limited financial and technical capacities that can be shared internally: Implementation requires significant (external) funding and capacity-building efforts.
- Ensuring coherence across a multiplicity of policy domains, such as climate change, disaster management, and sustainable development policies remains a challenge. In addition to the implementation across a variety across a multitude of participating states.
- Climate mobility can disrupt community cohesion and cultural practices, requiring careful management.

Final Remarks

The 2023 Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility represents a significant step forward in addressing the complex challenges of climate-induced migration and displacement in the Pacific. By prioritizing human security, regional cooperation, and policy coherence, the framework offers a comprehensive and innovative approach to climate mobility and potential South-South Cooperation. While challenges remain, the framework provides a strong foundation for building resilience and ensuring the rights and dignity of affected populations in the Pacific region. Its success will depend on sustained political will, adequate resources and allocated funding, and continued cooperation among all stakeholders.

EP 4. The Repeal of the Barbuda Land Act

Brief Description

Barbuda, a small island nation in the Caribbean and part of the Antigua and Barbuda federation, is highly vulnerable to climate change, with rising sea levels, hurricanes, and coastal erosion posing existential threats. The island's population of approximately 1,700 relies heavily on subsistence fishing and farming, with a unique communal land ownership system established after the abolition of slavery in 1833. This system, governed by the Barbuda Land Act[47] (2007), ensured that all land was community-owned, requiring democratic majority approval for any commercial development projects. Following the devastation of Hurricane Irma in 2017, the entire population of Barbuda was evacuated to Antigua, marking one of the first large-scale climate relocations in the region. However, the post-disaster response has raised significant concerns about the prioritization of financial interests over local rights and sustainable (re)development.

In 2018, the government repealed the Barbuda Land Act, replacing communal land ownership with a system of private land deeds which led to contentious debates about land ownership (if not land grabbing), forced immobility (after relocation), cultural preservation,

[47] See: https://laws.gov.ag/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Statutory_Instrument_No_54_2007.pdf

access to former means of subsistence, and the rights of displaced population. This move was justified as necessary for reconstruction but was widely criticized as a veiled means to attract foreign investors, including high-profile projects like the USD 250 million "Paradise Found" resort led by Robert De Niro and James Packer. The government's actions were seen as undermining the rights and sovereignty of Barbudans, leading to legal (court) challenges and widespread local opposition, arguing that the changes violated the constitution as well as their historical rights and cultural heritage. The Barbuda case has become a critical case study for climate-induced displacement and human mobility.

Objectives & Purposes

- The stated objectives of the government's post-disaster policies were:
- To rebuild Barbuda's infrastructure and economy through foreign direct investment.
- To 'modernize' land ownership systems to attract global capital.
- To engineer Barbuda into Antigua's Citizenship by Investment (CBI) program[48], offering citizenship to foreign investors, not least by a sudden (complementary) large-scale privatization of Barbudan land.

Actions/Activities Involved

- The government's actions included:
- The entire population of Barbuda was evacuated to Antigua following Hurricane Irma.
- The repeal of the Barbuda Land Act and introduction of private land deeds, enabling the sale of communal lands to foreign investors.
- Prioritize the expansion of the airport and luxury resorts over the reconstruction of basic public services like water and electricity.

Partners & Networks

The government's redevelopment efforts involved cooperation with: Foreign investors: High-profile projects owned by foreign investors like the "Paradise Found" resort led by Robert De Niro and James Packer; potentially, global tourism and investment networks.

Main Outcomes/Outputs

The outcomes of the government's policies include:

- Barbudans were evacuated and faced significant barriers to returning home. Active government neglect to facilitate the return of Barbudans seems to have been at play, especially given the fact that construction workers were rapidly

[48] See: https://cip.gov.ag/citizenship

allowed in to build a commercial airport (and projected aims to build a port for cruise tourism) instead of attending to basic public infrastructure, such as electricity and water supplies.

- The repeal of communal land ownership and introduction of private land deeds.
- Foreign investment projects prioritized luxury property developments (for foreign investors and tourists) over local needs, exacerbating economic disparities. Public funds appear to have been channeled into what would thus remain private and largely foreign-owned assets on Barbuda.
- Ongoing legal challenges and public protests highlight the contentious nature of the sudden land reforms.

Innovative Aspects

While the government's approach was dubbed "innovative" in its use of foreign investment to drive economic recovery, it was highly controversial. The subtle drive to integrate Barbuda into Antigua's CBI program (through the sudden provision of more commercialized land on offer for sale and foreign investment) represented a novel approach to attracting global capital for the local population. However, this innovation came at the immediate expense of local rights and cultural preservation, not least the access to formerly held communal lands, raising profound ethical concerns and legal (constitutional) challenges.

Effectiveness

The government's policies were effective in attracting foreign investment and initiating large-scale development projects. However, they were largely ineffective in addressing the needs of displaced Barbudans, many of whom continue to live in precarious conditions. The lack of local participation and prioritization of luxury developments over basic infrastructure has undermined the long-term sustainability of the approach.

Sustainability

The sustainability model of the government, focused on a financialization of land resources on Barbuda, is highly questionable. The prioritization of foreign investment over local land right systems has led to significant social and economic disparities today. Without meaningful participation from Barbudans and a focus on sustainable development, the long-term viability of the island's recovery and its population remains uncertain.

Scalability/Replicability

The Barbuda case highlights the potential pitfalls of top-down climate mobility policies that prioritize categorically (foreign) economic interests over local customs in terms of land rights. The Barbuda case serves as a cautionary tale about the importance of inclusive decision-making, the consultation of local bottom-up concerns in the Global South (beyond liaison with

governmental partners only), and the protection of communal rights in climate-related displacement and recovery efforts. This serves as a warning for South-South Cooperation in terms of climate mobility policymaking.

Features of Concern

The key challenges include:

- The repeal of the Barbuda Land Act undermined a 200-year-old system of communal ownership.
- Foreign investment projects failed to address the needs of local communities, leading to economic inequality and (forced) material dispossessions.
- The legal privatization of land and economic development of luxury resorts threatened Barbuda's cultural heritage and traditional livelihoods.
- Barbudans were excluded from decision-making processes, raising concerns about democratic consultation in view of fundamental changes in the legal, economic and socio-cultural relations thus far present on Barbuda, leading to widespread opposition.

Final Remarks

Barbuda's experience with forced displacement and human mobility in the context of climate change underscores the complex interplay between disaster recovery, economic development, and local rights. While the government's approach has attracted significant (private) foreign investment funding, it has also led to widespread opposition and legal challenges from local Barbudans. The case highlights the need for inclusive, rights-based approaches to climate mobility that prioritize the needs and voices of affected communities. In this context, recent examples of SIDS-led judicial cooperation offer important models for peer learning. In 2024, Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe formalized a bilateral agreement aimed at strengthening their legal systems through digital transformation, institutional modernization, and mutual training exchanges—underscoring the potential for South-South legal innovation grounded in local realities. Without such an approach, the long-term sustainability and equity of climate-related recovery efforts remain in doubt.

EP 5. Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency

Brief Description

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management (CDEMA) emerged from regional recognition of the need for a coordinated approach to disaster management. The Caribbean region is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, including hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and volcanic eruptions, exacerbated by climate change. Small island developing states (SIDS) in the region face unique challenges due to their limited land area, high population density in coastal

zones, and economic dependence on tourism and agriculture. Its establishment in 1991 followed years of political negotiations among Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states, which sought to address the inadequacies of fragmented national responses to disasters.

The agency's evolution from Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) to CDEMA in 2009 marked a shift from a focus on emergency response to a more comprehensive disaster management approach, integrating risk reduction and resilience-building. CDEMA is a regional intergovernmental organization established to coordinate disaster risk management and emergency response across the Caribbean. In case of a disaster, any Member State can issue a request to CDEMA, which in turn places a request to all members. In response to the request, individual member states can then signal their commitment to support the affected state through financial, organizational, logistic, in-kind or other measures. It serves as a key example for SSTC, but it could yet be further inspired by regional frameworks in the Pacific that focus more on climate mobility in terms of policy inspiration—especially in terms of international advocacy as a regional platform—moving forward.

Objectives & Purposes

- CDEMA's primary objectives include:
- Enhancing regional coordination mainly through the use of a notification mechanism for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Promoting comprehensive disaster management (CDM) through risk reduction and resilience-building.
- Strengthening national and regional capacities for disaster risk management (SSTC).
- Facilitating the integration of disaster risk management into national development planning.

Actions/Activities Involved

Then main CDEMA's activities include:

- Develop and implement a Caribbean Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy and Framework, which focuses on risk reduction, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Establish the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) to coordinate multi-country disaster response efforts.
- Conduct training and capacity-building programs for national disaster management agencies.
- Promote the SIDS development of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS) to enhance disaster preparedness.

Partners & Networks

CDEMA cooperates with a wide range of partners, including United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), CARICOM and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH); Disaster management agencies of CDEMA's 19 participating states. European Union (EU) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Main Outcomes/Outputs

CDEMA has achieved several key outcomes, including:

- Strengthened regional (South-South) coordination through the Regional Response Mechanism[49] (RRM), which has facilitated effective responses to major disasters such as Hurricane Maria (2017) and the volcanic eruption in Saint Vincent (2021).
- Development of the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy and Framework 2014–2024[50], which has guided national and regional disaster risk management efforts.
- Enhanced capacity for disaster preparedness and response through training programs and the establishment of the Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS)[51].

Innovative Aspects

CDEMA's innovative approaches include:

- The Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Framework, which integrates disaster risk reduction into national development planning.
- The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM), which enables rapid and coordinated multi-country disaster responses.
- The development of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS), which leverage technology to enhance preparedness and reduce disaster risks.

Effectiveness

CDEMA has been effective in enhancing regional disaster preparedness and response. The RRM has demonstrated its value during major disasters, while the CDM Framework has guided significant progress in risk reduction and resilience-building. The mechanism has proved highly

[49] The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) is a network of CDEMA Participating States (PSs), national, regional and international disaster stakeholders through which external response and relief operations in support of an impacted CDEMA Participating State are coordinated. See: https://www.cdema.org/RRM_Booklet_Final_PDF_version.pdf.

[50] It is viewed as the management of all hazards through all phases of the disaster management cycle (prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation). It involves the public and private sectors, as well as all segments of civil society and the general population. See: https://www.preventionweb.net/media/91893/download?startDownload=20250205

[51] It provides guidance on the treatment of early warning systems across multiple hazards. See: https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/latinamerica/52.-CDEMA-Model-National-MHEWS-Policy-DIPECHO-II.pdf

effective: following large-scale disasters such as hurricane Irma in 2017, member states rapidly provided disaster response to the most affected member states, including through supporting disaster-displaced populations and the relocation of affected communities and provision of shelter. Socio-economic integration of displaced individuals included enrolment of school-age children in schools and job matching support for youth and adults. Disaster-displaced persons are furthermore not required to show identification documents for intra-regional mobility if these documents have been lost or damaged, and in some cases may be granted indefinite stay in the hosting country and receive support for permanent resettlement.

Sustainability

The sustainability of CDEMA's initiatives depends on securing stable funding and building local capacities. The agency's emphasis on integrating disaster risk management into national development plans enhances sustainability, but long-term success will require continued political commitment and donor support.

Scalability/Replicability

CDEMA's model of regional coordination and comprehensive disaster management is highly replicable in other disaster-prone regions. Its emphasis on multi-stakeholder cooperation, early warning systems, and capacity-building offers valuable (South-South) lessons for global disaster risk management efforts.

Features of Concern

- Despite its successes, CDEMA faces several challenges:
- Heavy reliance on donor funding constrains long-term planning and implementation.
- Some member states lack the technical and human resources to fully implement CDM strategies.
- Increasing frequency and intensity of disasters strain regional response capacities.
- Ensuring effective cooperation among diverse stakeholders remains a persistent challenge.

Final Remarks

CDEMA has played a pivotal role in strengthening disaster risk management in the Caribbean. Its innovative approaches, such as the CDM Framework and RRM, have significantly enhanced regional preparedness and response capacities. However, challenges such as funding constraints and capacity gaps must be addressed to ensure its long-term effectiveness. CDEMA's model offers valuable insights for other regions grappling with similar challenges, underscoring the importance of regional cooperation and comprehensive disaster management strategies. CDEMA could benefit from further SSTC by incorporation elements of other SIDS frameworks,

especially those in the Pacific that can lend inspiration in terms of international advocacy when it comes to the plights surrounding exacerbating forms of climate mobility.

EP 6. IGAD MDCC Project

Brief Description

The "Addressing Drivers and Facilitating Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Contexts of Disasters and Climate Change in the IGAD Region[52]" regional programme, also known as IGAD MDCC Project. Established in 1996, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is a regional cooperation and economic and social development authority, comprising eight East African countries, Ethiopia, Eritrea[53], Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti, and Uganda. Altogether, they face severe climate change impacts, with approximately 2.3 million people displaced by climate-related disasters in 2020 alone54. Frequent droughts, floods, and desertification have disrupted livelihoods, leading to forced migration and displacement. Over 80% of the labour force in IGAD countries is engaged in agriculture, making them particularly susceptible to climate variability. IGAD has played a key role in developing regional strategies to address climate-induced migration and environmental degradation.

The 2021 IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of Persons[55] provides a legal framework for cross-border migration due to climate-related disasters, making it the first regional agreement to explicitly protect climate migrants by granting access to existing immigration processes, visa policies, and ethical labour migration schemes, the protocol supports adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and post-disaster recovery. Although MDCC was implemented from 2021 to 2023, it emerged from years of prior South-South and Triangular Cooperation and regional dialogue, including the adoption of the IGAD Regional Migration Policy Framework (2012) and the IGAD Regional Strategy on Climate Change (2020). It also aligns with international commitments such as the Global Compact for Migration[56] (2018) and the Paris Agreement[57] (2015). MDCC significantly supported key regional priorities, particularly through its contributions to IGAD's Regional Migration Policy Framework (2012) and the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD region[58].

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[52] See: https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/addressing-drivers-and-facilitating-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration-contexts-disasters-and-climate-change-igad-region

[53] All IGAD countries were involved in the Programme, except Eritrea.

[54] NYANDIKO, N. (2022). Disaster displacement and risk reduction strategies in IGAD, Forced Migration Review 69, Climate Crisis and Displacement: From Commitment to Action, pps 37-38 available at: https://www.fmreview.org/climate-crisis/nyandiko

[55]https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1411/files/event/file/Final%20IGAD%20PROTOCOL%20ENDORSED%20BY%20IGAD%20Ambassadors%20and%20Ministers%20of%20Interior%20and%20Labour%20Khartoum%2026%20Feb%202020.pdf

[56] https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/73/195

[57] https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/explanatory-memorandum-falepili-union-between-tuvalu-australia.pdf

[58]https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1411/files/event/file/Final%20IGAD%20PROTOCOL%20ENDORSED%20BY%20IGAD%20Ambassadors%20and%20Ministers%20of%20Interior%20and%20Labour%20Khartoum%2026%20Feb%202020.pdf

Objectives & Purposes

The overall objective of the MDCC was to contribute to facilitating pathways for regular migration in the IGAD region and minimizing displacement risk in the context of disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation, in line with the vision and guiding principles of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). MDCC was organized across four pillars: (I) Data and knowledge; (II) National and regional policy frameworks; (III) Disaster displacement preparedness; and (IV) Regular migration pathways.

The work under these pillars sought to achieve five outcomes:

- Enhancing access to (government aggregated) quality data and evidence on disaster displacement risk and other forms of human mobility.
- Including human mobility considerations in the context of disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation across relevant policy areas.
- Improving preparedness and operational readiness to respond to cross-border disaster displacement.
- Providing enhanced pathways for regular migration and access to protection services for migrants affected by the adverse impacts of disasters and climate change.
- Boosting access to sustainable livelihood and green job opportunities that prevent displacement and forced migration in climate and disaster-affected areas in the IGAD region.

Actions/Activities Involved

In general terms, MDCC involved several key activities, including:

- Develop disaster displacement risk profiles and decision-making models, and enhanced IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre's (ICPAC) data capacities.
- Conduct policy reviews and capacity-building workshops focusing on climate and disasters, national development plans, green economy policies, regularization and accessibility of migration pathways, and international protection to integrate human mobility into climate and disaster policies.
- Develop and test Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cross-border disaster displacement.
- Implement awareness campaigns, green economy pilot projects, and skills development initiatives in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia with the view to improve access to sustainable livelihood and green job opportunities.
- Strengthen community resilience against climate change impacts.

Due to the complexity and range of the MDCC, a closer look is brought to the Actions/Activities involved under Pillar (IV): Regular migration pathways (Outcome 5), which includes the initiatives more focused on improving access to sustainable livelihood and green job opportunities in a way to prevent displacement and forced migration in climate and disaster affected areas in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, listed below:

- Assess national and regional green economy policies for labour mobility references and developed recommendations for Member States to harness the potential of labour mobility. The latter aspect is relevant to ILO and serves as a potential inspiration for emerging practices in South-South Cooperation.
- Implement pilot projects based on policy recommendations to inform future policies from a migrant perspective.
- Conduct a rapid assessment on climate change, labour migration, and employment to guide interventions.
- Organize workshops to identify priority areas and shape intervention models.
- Train government and social partners on sustainable and environmentally responsible business practices.
- Develop models for green entrepreneurship, value chain creation, skills development, and financial access, validated through social dialogue.
- Provide life skills and entrepreneurship training for migrants to support income generation.
- Facilitate green job opportunities through training, coaching, and financial access to reduce out-migration drivers.
- Document and share pilot project results at national and international events to promote learning and scalability.

Partners & Networks

IGAD Member States, the IGAD Secretariat including IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC), CIMA Research Foundation, International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Labour Organization (ILO), the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). At the local levels, civil society organizations in Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia were also involved: Beza Posterity Development Organization (BPDO) in Ethiopia; Horn of Africa Community Development Action (HACDA) in Somalia, and Lotus Kenya Action for Development Organization (LOKADO) in Kenya.

Main Outcomes/Output

Under the 'Pillar (IV)', the main outcomes are listed below:

- Consultative forums on Human Mobility and Regular Migration Pathways, allowing stakeholders to provide input on integrating human mobility into green economy policies.
- Regional study on the integration of human mobility in national and regional green economy policies, considering climate change impacts.
- Pilot interventions based on study recommendations in Kenya: (Agroforestry and Climate-Smart Agriculture initiatives, including rangeland management, to enhance sustainable development and income generation) and Somalia (Skills-building programs for displaced populations, focusing on renewable energy, such as solar panel installation, repair, and maintenance and waste management/plastic recycling).
- Market system analysis to identify high-potential sectors for green job promotion where three key value chains were selected: Mug beans; Small ruminant fattening and Solar products.
- Stakeholders were trained on life skills and entrepreneurship using the ILO Start Your Business (SYB) tool (translated into Amharic).
- Participants began establishing green businesses/enterprises aligned with identified value chains.
- Facilitated access to finance and technical skills training in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and service providers.

Innovative Aspects

- MDCC programme combined data collection, policy development, and community-level interventions to address the complex nexus of climate change, disasters, and migration.
- Examination and enhancement of policies surrounding human mobility in the context of climate change and disasters
- Collaboration at regional, national and local levels to address human mobility issues in the context of disasters, including engaging climate-affected populations in decision-making.
- Tested innovative green economy interventions through pilot projects, such as solar energy training in Somalia and climate-smart agriculture in Kenya.

Relevance

The IGAD programme plays a crucial role in advancing regional discussions on climate-induced mobility by supporting the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, particularly its provisions on cross-border disaster displacement. While IGAD prioritizes migration related to freedom of movement and transhumance, the connection between climate change and labour migration remains underexplored within its agenda. The programme aligns

with regional priorities, notably through the Regional Consultative Process (RCP), which reflects member states' interests in addressing climate and migration issues. Additionally, it leverages ICPAC's expertise in climate data and early warning systems, enhancing the region's capacity for predictive modelling and disaster preparedness. However, its design primarily emphasizes regional coordination rather than direct integration into national policies, except in Kenya and Somalia, where pilot projects were informed by policy reviews on climate change, disasters, and the green economy. While Ethiopia's green legacy initiative and Kenya's climate-migration framework provided points of alignment, a more cohesive approach linking climate change, labour migration, and national policies could further strengthen the programme's impact and its potential to serve as a blueprint for South-South Cooperation elsewhere.

Effectiveness

Overall, MDCC was largely effective in achieving its objectives, particularly in enhancing data collection, policy coherence, and community resilience. Its success is evident in fostering regional cooperation and policy alignment, with stakeholders expressing high satisfaction despite challenges such as delays and resource constraints. Political transitions in Kenya and Somalia, conflict in Ethiopia, and persistent drought conditions posed disruptions, yet most activities were implemented as planned. The programme's adaptability and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders highlight its effectiveness, though areas such as data collection and policy impact assessment require further attention for improved measurement and sustainability. Additionally, MDCC demonstrated a viable framework for addressing migration, disasters, and climate change within the IGAD region in a clear expression of South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Many activities show potential for scaling up, provided future interventions integrate lessons learned and best practices taking into account the particularities of other contexts.

Sustainability

The MDCC programme has demonstrated strong potential for sustainability by integrating migration and climate change strategies into national development plans and fostering local ownership. Local authorities, such as Turkana County and Somalia's district administrations, have incorporated climate action into their policies and continued supporting green economy initiatives. The programme successfully engaged local, national, and regional partners, with key activities handed over to stakeholders, including data integration into ICPAC, SOP formalization by IGAD, and community-led initiatives in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya. Community engagement, training, and awareness-raising have fostered a sense of ownership, enhancing sustainability. However, sustained international support remains crucial to addressing drought conditions, funding gaps, and policy implementation. Stakeholder engagement, training, and infrastructure projects, such as plastic recycling in Mogadishu and climate adaptation committees in Turkana, have strengthened local resilience, but challenges persist in water access, policy frameworks, and financing. Efforts are ongoing to integrate displacement data into regional platforms, align

climate strategies with national policies, and secure further funding. While IGAD, ICPAC, and national governments acknowledge the need for continued action, achieving full policy integration and long-term impact will depend on securing additional resources and strengthening partnerships.

Scalability/Replicability

The MDCC programme provides a model that can be adapted to other regions facing similar challenges. Its emphasis on regional cooperation, community engagement, and alignment with global frameworks offers valuable lessons for migration and climate change governance. The successful pilot programme in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia provides a model for future interventions. The SOPs for cross-border disaster displacement can be replicated in other border regions, and the green economy initiatives can be scaled up with additional funding and support. However, replicability will require tailoring the framework to the specific cultural, political, and environmental contexts of other regions.

Features of Concern

The implementation of the MDCC programme faces several challenges, including:

- The pandemic restricted travel, delayed stakeholder meetings, and impacted field visits, while extended recruitment processes for consultants and implementing partners further slowed implementation. Initial programme delays also stemmed from the need to recruit teams, set up governance structures, and finalize implementation strategies.
- Conflicts in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia, election transitions in Kenya and Somalia, and Ethiopia's State of Emergency disrupted project access, paralyzed activities in some regions, and delayed implementation.
- In Somalia, policy changes were hindered by election turnover (political turmoil) and weak state/GCM structures. Revisions to some strategies required Steering Committee approval, delaying progress.
- Sustainability challenges highlighting the need to align interventions with local environmental realities, such as water availability.
- Despite these challenges, partners adjusted work plans to mitigate delays and sustain progress, ensuring continued implementation where possible.

Final Remarks

MDCC made significant progress in addressing migration and displacement challenges driven by disasters and climate change in the IGAD region. Through regional cooperation, community resilience initiatives, and alignment with global frameworks, the programme has laid a strong foundation for sustainable migration management. Several activities have already been successfully handed over to programme partners. However, ongoing support from international

community remains crucial to ensure long-term impact, particularly in addressing resource gaps for policy implementation and providing additional assistance to communities facing climate-related challenges such as drought in Kenya. Sustained political will, funding, and stakeholder cooperation will be key to ensuring the programme's continued success and expansion regionally as well as globally for the purpose of enhanced South-South Cooperation.

EP 7. Tuvalu & The Falepili Union Treaty

Brief Description

Although it is not a classic case of SSTC, The Falepili Union Treaty[59], signed on 9 November 2023 between Tuvalu and Australia, is here being framed as a potential blueprint for a more triangular cooperation initiative, especially as it brings elements that can be interesting, such as the negotiation process. It is the understadning of the authors that Tuvalu's experience can inform SSC-driven labour migration solutions elsewhere, especially if we look at some lessons learned. Therefore it is being included in the study. The treaty established a formalized migration pathway for Tuvaluans affected by climate change, allowing them to migrate to Australia under stable residency conditions, with the potential to acquire Australian citizenship. This agreement is framed as a "world first" in climate mobility cooperation, explicitly addressing the challenges of sea-level rise and land erosion faced by Tuvalu, a low-lying Pacific Island nation in the Pacific Ocean. The country's 11,000 inhabitants face increasing threats from flooding and land erosion, which have been exacerbated by rising sea levels over the past three decades, and this despite Tuvalu's many efforts to mitigate (through 'nature-based solutions', including engineering) against the immediate effects thereof.

The Falepili Union treaty was negotiated against the backdrop of Tuvalu's long-standing concerns about climate change and its impact on the nation's future. The negotiations were influenced by Australia's strategic interests in the Pacific region, particularly in maintaining influence over Tuvalu's critical security infrastructure and defense policies. This has sparked controversy about the scalability of the Falepili Agreement, both locally and internationally, raising concerns that its underlying premise may be in contravention to the 'good faith' principle in dealing diplomatically with climate-vulnerable sates, as formalized under the obligations for signatories to the Paris Agreement, to which Australia remain Party. The Treaty's provisions on security cooperation were a condition for Australia's humanitarian gestures, raising questions about the balance of power between the two nations in terms of neo-colonial and imperialist tendencies in geopolitics, and serious question about the encroachment of the sovereignty of vulnerable climate distressed states.

Objectives & Purposes

[59] https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/australia-tuvalu-falepili-union-treaty.pdf
https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/tuvalu/australia-tuvalu-falepili-union

The primary objective of the Falepili Union Treaty is to provide Tuvaluans with a legal and therefore dignified pathway for climate-induced migration to Australia. The Treaty aims to ensure that Tuvaluans can access permanent residency, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities in Australia, with the possibility of obtaining Australian citizenship. Additionally, the Treaty seeks to address the broader issue of “climate mobility justice", rendering it a potential modeling tool on offer for other climate-vulnerable nations, especially in the Global South in terms of regional South-South Cooperation.

Actions/Activities Involved

The Falepili Treaty establishes a "special human mobility pathway" based on a bilateral migration agreement for Tuvaluans while it also includes provisions for Australia to offer further financial and technical assistance to Tuvalu for climate adaptation policies and resilience-building. The areas of cooperation covered in the Treaty are Building Climate Resilience; Safeguarding Collective Peace and Security; Telecommunications; Education; Fiscal Support; Connectivity and Health, and Mobility with Dignity. Under this domain, Australia will support Tuvalu with the following:

- Provide Tuvaluan citizens the choice to migrate to Australia – temporarily or permanently – to live, work, and study as permanent residents.
- Facilitate access to Australian health and education services and provide key income family support on arrival for Visa holders.
- Ensure that Visa holders will have freedom to travel to and from Australia to maintain connections with family and community in Tuvalu
- To support Tuvalu to uplift its passport, immigration, citizenship and border controls to ensure shared interests in the integrity of the special visa arrangement.

Partners & Networks

The primary partners in the Falepili Union Treaty are the governments of Tuvalu and Australia. The treaty reflects Australia's broader strategy of bolstering its influence in the Pacific region, particularly in response to an increasing and assertive Chinese presence. That said, the Treaty also suggests adherence to several international climate change frameworks, such as the Paris Agreement, which emphasizes the need for multilateral cooperation in addressing climate change concerns that have a global character. This stipulation offers perspectives to broaden the treaty to include a South-South Triangular character (in case other parties in the Pacific would be allowed to join). The template itself could also be taken up as an adaptable blueprint for regional (climate migration) cooperation frameworks in the Pacific, between SIDS (and developing states), signaling the potential of the Falepili Treaty to enhancing South-South cooperation more broadly.

Main (Expected) Outcomes

Under the “mobility with dignity dimension”, the Treaty’s Explanatory Memorandum[60] clarifies that initial annual allocation of up to 280 visas could be mutually adjusted each program year. It also puts forward the following detailed provisions:

- Visas would provide for indefinite permanent residency, with freedom for unlimited travel to and from Australia.
- Visas would be allocated through a random ballot, managed by Australia, with a small ballot fee.
- Applicants would need to be at least 18 years old, but spouses and dependent children could be included.
- Australia would provide support for applicants to find work and to the growing Tuvaluan diaspora in Australia to maintain connection to culture and improve settlement outcomes.
- Applicants and visa holders would need to meet standard character requirements.
- The pathway would be open to Tuvaluans with disabilities, special needs and chronic health conditions.
- Communicable disease restrictions (such as tuberculosis) would apply.

Innovative Aspects

The Falepili Union Treaty is innovative in its explicit framing of climate mobility as a form of "climate cooperation" (Article 2) and its emphasis on "human mobility with dignity" (Article 3). By providing a legal pathway for migration, the Treaty offers a potential model for other climate-vulnerable nations. The latter presents a major concern for any organization working on labour rights, human dignity, and international migration; ILO and its constituents being core stakeholders here. However, its innovative aspects are tempered by the controversial provisions on security cooperation, which complicate its potential as a replicable model for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the Falepili Union treaty in addressing climate mobility remains uncertain. While it provides a legal pathway for migration, many Tuvaluans are reluctant to leave their homeland, and the treaty's provisions on security cooperation have sparked significant controversy in Tuvalu and from international observers. The treaty's success will depend on its ability to balance the humanitarian needs of Tuvaluans with the geopolitical interests of Australia, as well as its compatibility with broader principles of climate justice and multilateral cooperation. That said, and when isolated, the Falepili Union Treaty still harbors a set of commendable practices that are worth emphasizing. The Treaty caters to a maximum degree of legal protection in the context of international migration. The significance of these provisions

[60] https://www.dfat.gov.au/countries/tuvalu/explanatory-memorandum-falepili-union-between-tuvalu-and-australia

(including access to citizenship in the country of arrival) stems from the comparative fact that global migrants forced to cross international borders in other circumstance often remain subject to illegalization and therefore manifold precarities, deprived labour rights, and work under conditions that are not regulated by local labour law nor privy to any formal kind of (social) assistance following injury or redundancy. These nefarious eventualities are to be remedied at all costs and thus necessitate a balanced (migrant- and labour-centric) reading of the Falepili agreement in the larger context of the global world of work.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the Falepili Union Treaty is questionable, particularly in light of its impact on Tuvalu's sovereignty. The treaty's provisions on security cooperation risk creating long-term dependencies on Australia, which could undermine Tuvalu's ability to pursue independent foreign policies, even in the realm of climate-related mitigation strategies. Additionally, the treaty's focus on bilateralism may limit its potential to contribute to broader, multilateral efforts to address climate change in the Pacific region.

Scalability/Replicability

The Falepili Union Treaty has the potential to serve as a model for other climate-vulnerable nations, particularly in the Global South, and specifically when it comes to certain labor migration provisions, and aspects of labour rights protection in the context of international migration. However, its scalability and replicability are limited due to the controversial provisions on security cooperation undergirding the Treaty, which may not be acceptable to other nations facing similar climate concerns. Hence, for the Treaty to serve as a clearly replicable model, it would need to adhere more closely to the principles of climate justice and multilateral cooperation, as outlined in the Paris Agreement.

Features of Concern

One of the main challenges of the Falepili Union Treaty is its impact on Tuvalu's sovereignty. Article 4 of the Treaty requires Tuvalu to seek Australia's approval for any security or defense-related agreements with third countries, which critics argue undermines Tuvalu's autonomy. Additionally, and often critically overlooked, many Tuvaluans are reluctant to leave their ancestral lands, raising questions about the Treaty's effectiveness in addressing the cultural and emotional dimensions of climate mobility. The Treaty's focus on bilateralism, without due attention for land attachment (self-sufficiency) and its implications for the (landless) migrant labour implied, also risks marginalizing other Pacific nations and undermining the principles of multilateral climate cooperation. Indeed, the risk of suddenly becoming ‘forcibly displaced, landless workers-cum-climate refugees’ highlights the danger of the creation of novel (unsustainable) aid dependencies for impoverished and precarious communities on-the-move

that may additionally get stigmatized upon arrival in a different country or society, with all the nefarious downstream (integration) effects for dignified lives and migrant labour rights.

Final Remarks

The Falepili Union treaty represents a significant and relatively innovative step forward in addressing the challenges of climate mobility, particularly for low-lying island nations like Tuvalu. Especially its implied provisions on labour rights protection in the context of international migration hold significant potential for replicability. However, its impact on Tuvalu's sovereignty and its focus on bilateralism raise important ethical and practical concerns. For the Treaty to serve as a replicable model for North-South and South-South cooperation, it will need to foreground more centrally the humanitarian needs of climate-vulnerable communities and principles of climate justice and multilateralism. Moving forward, it is essential to ensure that climate assistance to vulnerable SIDS in the Global South is not subsumed under the geopolitical agendas of powerful nations, but rather guided by the principles of good faith, climate cooperation, just transitions, and equitable cooperation.

Critical Note on Knowledge Production (Epistemology)

Although the "moving with dignity" approach pioneered by Kiribati was not selected as one of the case studies, it brings some important epistemological concerns about what some critics have dubbed to be a selective 'climate hysteria' in view of dynamic local perspectives and practices. Kiribati, a Pacific Island nation, will—much like Tuvalu—likely become entirely submerged by rising sea levels, notwithstanding a set of climate adaptation efforts to mitigate their immediate effects. Yet, Kiribati is one of those examples where many of the inhabitants have thus far chosen to stay put despite these dire international projections about the future.

Through its former President Anote Tong, Kiribati had first promoted a novel line of policy advocacy around 'moving with dignity', pressing the need for interstate collaboration and the establishment of legal and secure migration pathways. In a famous address to the UN General Assembly in 2014, Tong advocated for reducing the burden on climate-vulnerable states and advocated for a collaborative strategy of "migration with dignity". In so doing, his address foregrounded the need for alleviating educational qualifications of the populations of climate-vulnerable states in the Pacific so that their employability (via relevant skill sets) would facilitate more smoothly a pending and projected form of interstate labour mobility. Significantly, Tong thus sought to actively reconfigure 'climate migration' as a potential form of 'labour migration'. However, more recently Kiribati has switched gears, and no longer advocates for a policy of emigration.

Indeed, the new government, on the impetus of the lamentations of the local population increasingly satiated by alarmist 'climate hysteria' by outsiders (without it leading to structural

solutions for their plights), no longer foregrounds in its policy 'migration with dignity' as the main solution. Instead, among the local population a new paradigm seems to be taking hold, one of 'staying in place with dignity' (as long as possible). Some of the core drivers behind this rearticulation from below on Kiribati were self-pride (agency) in the face of a sense of beleaguerment; a sense of not being adequately consulted in global debates that affected them most; a sense of exhaustion in the face of advocacy falling short of viable and structural funding and (multi-lateral) policy initiatives; the foregrounding of cultural rootedness and the emotional attachment to land in local *Pasifika* culture (e.g., the reluctance of abandoning ancestral graveyards); as well as the sovereign and overall desire to retain as much (place-specific) cultural continuity as possible, while contemplating pathways forward in a more gradual and stepwise manner.

The Kiribati case is therefore an important one in terms of research ethics, and epistemology (i.e., reflexivity about the production of knowledge) and its tangible (policy) effects. It is important to be reminded of a potential mismatch not only between the views of international commentators, analysts and observers, on the one hand, and the local population, on the other hand; but also of continued dynamics of fortitude, against the odds, even in the face of climate change patterns, not least in terms of preferring to 'stay with (a degree of) dignity' (i.e. voluntary immobility) rather than to blindly accept (under half-hearted conditions) the faith of (largely) becoming landless 'refugees' in need of foreign (government) assistance (in a specific context where they would likely be prone to ethnic discrimination as *Pasifika* minorities, as documented in nearby industrialized states, such as Australia or New Zealand.

At first sight, some readers may be astonished by this Kiribati trend, but it shows foremost how complex the nexus between climate change and displacement/mobility/migration remains on the ground to the people most involved. Yet, some critical observers have addressed this unfolding complexity by questioning first and foremost the ever-increasingly alarmism by which outsiders (relatively unaffected by the direct effects of climate change) approach this complex nexus and, by consequence, frame the perceptions and actions of local populations:

> *"In mainstream climate adaptation thinking, physical retreat from highly vulnerable places is assumed to be inevitable in some circumstances—when adaptation measures have been exhausted. The potential scale of these movements has long been sensationalized in media and some activist, policy, and academic narratives, which grimly predict mass displacement of "climate refugees" from low-lying areas toward inland regions. One such projection estimates a worst-case scenario in which rising sea levels could push up to 2 billion people off their land by 2100. Critics argue that these predictions are overly simplistic, lack scientific rigor, and are often rooted in technocratic, paternalistic, and Western modes of thinking. This doomsday discourse, which posits affected populations as "refugees," is generated largely by outsiders relative to the places most vulnerable to climate change. Further, the decisions individuals make to flee climate impacts—and therefore, the eventual number who will leave—are complex and rarely*

driven by climate change alone. Such decisions, and the ensuing migration trajectories that might be expected, can be more fully and accurately understood by focusing on the perspectives of affected people" (FARBOTKO, 2018)[61].

Importantly, Pacific islanders seem to be increasingly wary of merely being 'written about' (in view of the relatively meagre assistance received, especially given their historically low emission rates) instead of being consulted more directly and actively as equitable partners-partners, moreover, who have the most to lose in the near to medium future. Hence, institutional actors concerned with climate change and mobility in the Global South may need to be vigilant and made more aware of such local concerns. Taking on a consultative approach, one that not only touches on generic cases or restricts itself to consultation with government officials of the states affected but equally surveys the views of local populations, their knowledge on the matter, as well as their aspirations and already existing initiatives on the ground, could indeed help facilitate the fragile drive towards a more comprehensive model for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which is also one of the key interests of this report.

The 07 emerging practices outlined in these case studies demonstrate how South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) may be contributing to shape regional responses to climate mobility in ways that prioritize shared governance, mutual learning, and human-centered adaptation strategies. By fostering intra-regional agreements and national policy frameworks, SSTC enables climate-affected nations to collectively address mobility as part of long-term resilience rather than as a last-resort displacement response.

The Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility and the Falepili Union Treaty illustrate how SIDS are proactively designing legal and institutional mechanisms that facilitate climate-responsive migration, planned relocation, and community stabilization. These agreements ensure that mobility remains a structured and rights-based process, rather than an unregulated movement triggered by crisis. Similarly, Fiji's Planned Relocation Guidelines and Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement offer locally driven models that emphasize cultural preservation, land rights, and inclusive decision-making, setting valuable precedents for other SSTC-led initiatives.

Beyond national efforts, regional institutions such as CARICOM and PIF are strengthening SSTC by enhancing policy coherence, knowledge-sharing, and capacity-

[61] FARBOTKO, C. [Migration Policy Institute] (2018). "No Retreat: Climate Change and Voluntary Immobility in the Pacific Islands".

building. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) highlights how regional cooperation can improve disaster response and preparedness, reducing the risk of climate-induced displacement. Meanwhile, the Caribbean Single Market and Economy's evolving approach to labour mobility signals a growing recognition that climate adaptation must include economic stability through intra-regional migration frameworks.

The case of Kiribati's shift from "migration with dignity" to "staying in place with dignity" underscores the importance of local agency in shaping climate mobility decisions. It also reflects a broader trend within SSTC, where affected nations are advocating for solutions that align with cultural identity, sovereignty, and long-term sustainability rather than externally imposed narratives of inevitable migration.

in the final analysis, these case studies demonstrate that SSTC is more than a tool for managing climate mobility: it can also be a mechanism for self-determination, collective resilience, and policy innovation. By prioritizing regional governance, community-driven strategies, and mutual support, SSTC ensures that climate mobility remains a choice rooted in justice, equity, and sustainable development.

CONCLUSIVE REMARKS: PRELIMINARY INSIGHTS ON EMERGING PRACTICES

This exploratory pilot report has aimed to identify and systematize relevant cases of emerging practices related to climate change, human mobility and a just transition with a particular focus on the Pacific and Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the potential for enhanced South-South Cooperation and exchange. In this capacity, the report was envisioned to be a living working document for others to take up and continue working on as the urgent nexus topic—which remains in flux, also in terms of institutional and scientific reporting—of climate mobility surges to pertinence on global agendas. Current climate projections indicate a high likelihood of worsening global warming and rising sea levels, which are expected to exacerbate climate mobility. Given the geographic vulnerabilities of both regions, many SIDS face significant climate exposure and risks from both sudden-onset and slow-onset events. Considering these urgent developments, it proved crucial indeed to map emerging climate adaptation practices—both in terms of policymaking and as bottom-up initiatives among local communities—in two critical regions, the Pacific and Caribbean, so as to get a basic sense of what is out there, what could thus far be learned, as well as potentially exchanged in terms of knowledge transfer across states and communities, not least in the context of enhancing South-South and South-South Triangular Cooperation.

The report adopts a transparent and holistic approach, which has proven productive in highlighting local concerns about specific climate-related policies. This approach reveals potential mismatches between top-down planning, third-party reporting, and the realities and concerns of those most affected on the ground. In doing so, this working document aims to contribute to greater harmonization in future policymaking and institutional agenda-setting, particularly within the framework of South-South Cooperation. As mentioned above, identifying critical tensions, former pitfalls, and even categorical ambiguities in addressing climate change in the Pacific and Caribbean SIDS contexts may gradually come to benefit other climate-affected and vulnerable communities in the Global South, with the potential outcome of avoiding locally a repetition of past missteps or setbacks occurring elsewhere.

Historically and today, the Pacific region has been characterized by human movement across various island chains and states. In the context of worsening climate conditions, a trend has emerged of people moving from outer islands to more centrally located ‘main’ islands, as well as from rural to more urbanized areas. Hence, discussions on the complex nexus of climate mobility must acknowledge that displacement due to climate change and sudden-onset disasters is deeply intertwined with other pre-existing drivers of human mobility. Labour migration, for instance, is already influenced by intricate and shifting factors, often simplified as mechanistic ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors, which in reality may vary strongly depending on the population and

subgroup under discussion, their specific geographical origins, and their intended (temporary or permanent) destinations in a larger web of shifting (personal or family-based) considerations.

It is, therefore, somewhat precarious to draw a stark distinction between climate-induced 'forced' migrations and relocations, on one hand, and 'semi-voluntary' forms of (labour) migration, on the other. These forms of migration are often entangled, as climate-affected communities frequently see their means of subsistence and livelihoods diminished or disappear altogether in the wake of climate disasters, relocations, or migrations. This complexity is often overlooked in the literature and reporting, precisely because it complicates the allegedly bifurcated narrative of 'climate mobility' versus 'other types of movement'. For now, it is sufficient to note that multiple, overlapping drivers of migration may often be at play, making the reporting on climate mobility a delicate task indeed.

To date, there is no legally defined terminology to clearly state—let alone comprehensively protect under international law—human mobility specifically caused by climate change. As such, this document employs the term 'climate mobility' holistically to map a range of human movements reported to be linked to climate-induced alterations. It has also sought to identify emerging practices aimed at addressing these movements, including both top-down policies and bottom-up community initiatives. The cases researched in the Pacific reveal that climate mobility encompasses both forced and semi-voluntary movements, within and across state borders, and can be either pre-designed as permanent or temporary, or dealt with adaptively after the fact.

A critical, yet underreported, issue underlying contemporary climate mobility is the impact on household subsistence economies. This complicates discussions about climate mobility beyond quick-fix solutions. The immediate or downstream effects of climate-induced changes on livelihoods not only influence the actions and aspirations of affected SIDS communities but also add layers of complexity to policymaking on emerging adaptation practices. Whether dealing with international migration, planned relocation, or forced humanitarian displacement, questions about the sustainability of household economies in the wake of such movements remain paramount. How these 'secondary' concerns are anticipated may in fact be decisive to the overall sustainability and scalability of emerging climate adaptation strategies.

This caveat on household economies is particularly relevant in the Pacific and Caribbean SIDS, where many households rely on small-scale agriculture and fishing to supplement more formalized income sources, if any. In the event of climate-induced displacements, access to labour and subsistence resources in the destination areas/countries is not guaranteed, whether for internal relocation, displacement, or international migration. Complicating the matter is that existing communities, such as those in Fiji, suddenly also need to share space and resources with incoming populations, leading to discussions about customary access to natural resources and ways of deliberating access in intelligibly in ways that lead to smooth (i.e. locally normative) forms of accommodation, and thus relatively equitable outcomes. Communities, in the end, require

viable economic conditions to seriously consider the permanence of their relocation. Ensuring dignified living conditions and addressing labour sources as well as labour protection perspectives are therefore key to any recovery or adaptation strategy, both for those on the move as well as for the communities that may need or seek to accommodate them.

Planned relocations in the Pacific often occur in response to severe coastal erosion, inundations from cyclones, high tides, and the downstream effects of volcanic activity. Fiji provides a noteworthy example, with the government making strong efforts to (pro-actively) facilitate and anticipate the complexities of planned relocations. Fiji's policy focuses on relocating communities within customary land boundaries whenever feasible, and it has led complex negotiations with host communities and traditional *Pasifika* leaders to mitigate potential conflicts and maintain social cohesion. This participatory approach, mindful of customary laws and local sensitivities (across internal diversity), has fostered consensus and made relocations more sustainable in the medium to long term.

Many emerging practices in climate mobility have been developed in collaboration with external partners and donors, both in terms of financing and knowledge exchange. It is therefore crucial to ensure relatively easy access to climate finance for SIDS in distress, given that these vulnerable states have historically been low emitters yet face the most immediate consequences of climate-induced changes. Large, industrialized nations, particularly those with a long history of emissions, thus hold an important role to play in multilateral dialogue, reciprocal responsibility, and accountable leadership through climate-related cooperation and financing. This support can help vulnerable states mitigate the most serious and immediate consequences through Risk Reduction Management (RRM) and climate adaptation strategies, fostering resilience in the short to medium term while more comprehensive policies are developed.

In the context of SIDS, several key developments and concerns can be highlighted through the cases reviewed. For example, the Vanuatu government, known for its leadership in climate advocacy, has recognized the importance of community committees in its national climate and disaster management. These Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs), often established in collaboration with NGOs and the Red Cross, serve as focal points for disseminating and implementing government policies. However, these committees are largely volunteer-based and lack consistent government funding, raising concerns about their sustainability. While the government formally acknowledges their importance, it has not provided adequate financial or structural support, leading to a reliance on NGOs and community fundraising on the local level. This gap highlights the need for greater transparency and financial commitment from the government to strengthen these community-level initiatives by means of the allocating means that become available on the national level (in part via international funding).

Another key feature in the debate is the potential role of pre-existing labour migration dynamics in alleviating pressure in current climate mobility. Some voices suggest expanding

labour migration agreements as an innovative policy response to climate change. For instance, following Cyclone Pam in 2015, New Zealand extended the legal stay of seasonal worker visas for Ni-Vanuatu workers, allowing them to earn additional savings to support their families back home. While such initiatives show promise, they must be carefully managed to avoid exploitation and ensure equitable labour protections for (temporary) migrant workers.

To conclude, and in summary, the report offers several recapitulations in the schematic form of brief key takeaways:

- Climate mobility in the context of South-South Cooperation is a novel and complex nexus theme. This report was exploratory in nature, aiming to map emerging practices and inspire policymakers, practitioners, and citizens in vulnerable countries.
- Recognizing indigenous knowledge and local initiatives is crucial. Affected communities should be seen as knowledge experts, not just victims, and their existing adaptation mechanisms should be integrated into policy frameworks and financing mechanisms.
- Multilateral policymaking must integrate community-centered approaches to avoid creating new aid dependencies and ensure sustainable, dignified solutions.
- Many communities prefer to stay in place due to cultural (heritage) and economic (subsistence) attachments to their land. Policymakers must be made critically aware of these preferences and avoid forced relocations—especially permanent ones that render people landless overnight—at all cost.
- Complementing nature-based (hard engineering) solutions with community-led approaches can holistically enhance climate adaptation strategies, drawing on local traditions and customs as well as the ample local initiatives, many of which remain understudied and under consulted, thus hiding in plain sight (for those caring to look beyond formal policies and the national level in terms of adaptation and resilience strategies).
- As above mentioned, critical issue remains economic difficulties and labour market fluctuations caused by climate change. This raises concerns about inequalities, as climate migration is often facilitated by professional recruitment programs targeting skilled workers.

Having touched on the main (practical and analytical) findings in terms of emerging practices in realm of climate mobility, as well as some of the pending policy concerns, a series of final pointed remarks can be summarized below that constitute miscellaneous takeaways in

terms of the climate mobility nexus in general, and emerging practices in the context of the Pacific and Caribbean SIDS and potential South-South and Triangular Cooperation, in specific:

- Current debates on the international level may benefit from elaborating on a potential qualidication of a threshold definition to lend some degree of international legal protection to individuals on-the-move in the context of **climate mobility**. While some legal experimentation and precedents have been set in motion on an *ad hoc* basis, more could be done in terms of multilateral benchmarks to generate clear legal (humanitarian) definitions in the realm of climate mobility so that adequate and uniform protection mechanisms can be put into place and adhered to in a more generic (rather than arbitrary) manner.
- Given that climate mobility is projected to increase, it is adamant that relevant policy instruments, legal frameworks, and appropriate benchmarks are identified to anticipate such dynamics. Expanding labour migration agreements for this purpose (i.e. as a humanitarian gesture) may represent one way forward in practical terms, but vigilance is due in that domain so as not to exacerbate the labour exploitation of already vulnerable communities on-the-move. The creation of South-South cooperation, bilateral and multilateral agreements and MOUs could also support this process.
- Most states and communities prefer retaining political sovereignty and cultural continuity and therefore prioritize disaster risk reduction mechanisms and climate change adaptation strategies. To co-facilitate this process, climate-related development funding and assistance from large, industrialized states (with a historical record of emission) remains critical in terms of a 'just transition'.
- Climate change agreements (e.g. the Falepili Union Treaty) ought to be safeguarded as much as possible from being subsumed under the aegis of '*realpolitik*', specifically the geopolitics of large, industrialized states (e.g., Australia). Moving forward, it is relevant here to refer to the 'good faith' principle in dealing diplomatically with climate-vulnerable states, as formalized under the obligations for signatories to the Paris Agreement. The same goes for subsuming climate change management under predatory 'disaster capitalism' for property (speculative real estate) 'redevelopment', where active government negligence (e.g. Barbuda) forces already vulnerable people into a dynamic of permanent relocation, forced immobility, and perpetual precarity if not outright impoverishment.
- The most recent concerns voiced by local populations in the Pacific facing climate change is that there may in fact be limits to climate adaption strategies in the

realm of mobility itself. This critical self-awareness may, on the one hand, stem from a certain fatigue of local populations confronted by relentless 'inspection' by outsiders without being offered structural (financial and legal) remedies.

- On the other hand, and especially in the Pacific, people are not only bound to their lands in terms of it representing a critically important economic means for subsistence and household economies, but equally in profoundly spiritual ways where cultural attachments to ancestral lands represent a basic tenet of sovereignty. Hence, some island nations in particular (e.g., Kiribati) have now started moving away from embracing publicly a policy discourse of 'moving with dignity'—set up earlier to reframe the humanitarian discourses away from an unwarranted 'victimhood' perceived as void of any dignified agency (in view of a long tradition of local action taken in the face of climate change by those most affected by its effects)—to a new (bottom-up) discourse centering on 'staying with dignity', irrespective of whether it being largely an aspiration or not.
- Institutional agendas of multilateral organization seeking to contribute to climate mobility debates and resolutions ought to take note of such recent developments for the sake of harmonizing their initiatives with the pressing and most recent plights of the communities on the ground which they intend to serve.
- South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) is emerging as a key mechanism for climate-induced mobility governance in SIDS, ensuring regional autonomy, policy coordination, and knowledge-sharing. By integrating labour migration, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction, SSTC enables structured, rights-based mobility rather than crisis-driven displacement. SSTC also prioritizes local agency, ensuring that solutions align with cultural and economic realities based on bottom-up approaches rather than imposed solutions. In time, SSTC strengthens regional solidarity, helping SIDS assert their collective voice in global climate governance, ensuring that climate mobility remains a choice, not a forced outcome.
- In practical terms, some key conditions need to be in place in order to potentially promote any successful replication or adaptation of the selected emerging practices, or some of their elements, to other countries or regions, such as: alignment with national and local priorities, engagement of stakeholders at multiple levels, and provision of mechanisms for capacity building. The Pacific and Caribbean regions can further engage in concrete exchanges of experiences based on some of the elements and lessons learned pointed out in this report:

  1) Establish policy dialogues between PIF and CARICOM where policymakers share best practices and lessons learned on legal protections, social support systems and migration governance as to facilitate the development/improvement of regional

mobility agreements for climate-displaced populations, with the participation of IGAD representatives.
2) Organize legal workshops between policymakers from both regions could help develop climate migration laws and funding mechanisms.
3) Create a Pacific-Caribbean working group focusing on climate-smart tourism, blue economy models, and renewable energy investments as a way to boost economic resilience through a just transition perspective.
4) To develop a knowledge-sharing platform for governments and businesses to exchange best practices and lessons learned in transitioning from climate-vulnerable economic sectors to sustainable alternatives.
5) Disaster risk reduction and early warning systems could benefit from a tri-regional exchange with IGAD, leveraging their cross-border early warning models.
6) Organize an interregional youth leadership programme to strengthen advocacy and policy engagement in both regions. These are some concrete examples of exchanges that could foster South-South cooperation, strengthening climate governance, economic adaptation, and mobility frameworks across both regions.

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