

27th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change,
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The climate crisis is a human crisis: Displaced people are on its frontlines.

Loss and damage from the impacts of climate change is already a devastating reality for millions of people as climate-fueled crises, food and water insecurity and loss of habitable territory drive new displacement and make life harder for people already uprooted from their homes. Weather shocks are pushing subsistence livelihoods to breaking point and testing peaceful co-existence between communities already living on the edge. In the most vulnerable countries and communities, access to life-saving information and support to community resilience and preparedness for further shocks is woefully lacking.

The consequences are particularly devastating for people living in **conflict-affected and fragile situations**. While resilience is being severely eroded by relentless blows, authorities in these contexts often lack the capacity or willingness to protect the most vulnerable, and financial and other support remains scarce relative to escalating needs.

Around 70% of refugees and 80% of people internally displaced by conflict come from countries that are also highly climate vulnerable.

Four in every ten refugees are hosted in highly climate vulnerable countries, where they often live alongside host communities in similarly precarious conditions.

Safe and sustainable solutions for displaced people are becoming harder to achieve as climate change adds to degraded and dangerous conditions in areas of origin and refuge. Climate shocks are throwing fuel on the fire of persistent cycles of crisis and displacement. Disasters brought on by hazardous weather events, such as storms and floods, and made more likely by slow-onset climate impacts, such as on sea level rise and desertification, displace millions of people every year – including many in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

Nine in every ten conflict-displaced returnees in 2021 returned to highly climate vulnerable countries or situations.

Countries and communities least responsible for global heating are being hit hardest - and they are calling for “climate justice”. At the same time, **displaced people and their hosts are already taking action**, working with stakeholders at all levels to protect the environment and strengthen resilience where it is most needed.



Bangladesh. Rohingya refugees join efforts to re-green camp forests, October 2021-UNHCR/Saikat Mojumder

**Representatives of displaced people will be at the COP:
UNHCR and partners will be amplifying their voices!**

WE URGE UNFCCC PARTIES AND STAKEHOLDERS TO:

1. INVOLVE DISPLACED PEOPLE AND THEIR HOSTS ON THE CLIMATE FRONTLINES IN THE DECISIONS THAT IMPACT THEIR LIVES

Displaced people and their hosts possess knowledge and capacities critical to effective and inclusive climate action, but all too often they are left out of the global conversation and marginalized from decisions that will determine their future. Their inclusion and meaningful participation in policy processes and lifesaving decisions is **both their right and necessary for impactful solutions**. Locally-owned initiatives, led by the people closest to realities on the ground have the greatest capacity to build lasting resilience and break cycles of crisis, displacement, and dependence on external assistance. Their voices and untapped potential, along with others in climate vulnerable situations, must be enabled.

- Enable meaningful engagement, participation and co-implementation of climate action with displaced communities and their hosts, including through adopting and implementing principles for **locally led adaptation**.ⁱ
- Increase the coverage and accessibility of **climate risk analysis and early warning systems for anticipatory action that is inclusive** of displaced people and their hosts, particularly in fragile and conflict affected contexts.
- Promote and enable **decentralized access to climate finance for local actors** who work directly with climate-vulnerable communities.
- Include displaced people and their specific protection and assistance needs in the development of **climate policy frameworks and strategies, including National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**, and in coherence with disaster risk reduction strategies and wider frameworks for sustainable development.



Mauritania. Refugee volunteers fighting bush fires near Malian camp, October 2021- UNHCR/Colin Delfosse

2. URGENTLY SCALE UP ADDITIONAL FINANCE AND SUPPORT FOR ADAPTATION AND LOSS AND DAMAGE TO AVOID THE WORST OUTCOMES AND REDUCE THE SUFFERING OF MILLIONS OF DISPLACED PEOPLE AND THEIR HOSTS

As climate impacts escalate, the gap between humanitarian needs and resources to respond to them is widening. Delays in the delivery of promised climate finance and support for vulnerable countries and communities are taking a growing toll. UNHCR operations are witnessing the heartbreaking reality of climate-related displacement worldwide, with loss and damage projected to increase along with associated costs ranging from US \$290 billion to US \$580 billion.ⁱⁱ Meanwhile, resources needed to shore up resilience remain out of reach for displaced people on the climate frontlines.

On finance

- Meet the commitment to provide US \$100 billion annually for developing countries, ensuring at least 50 per cent of climate finance goes to **adaptation**: including displaced people and their hosts, particularly women and children, and in hard-to-reach areas.
- Mobilize additional finance for climate vulnerable countries to minimize and address **loss and damage** related to displacement, including through:
 - **Investing in early warning systems, community-based preparedness and anticipatory action**ⁱⁱⁱ ahead of predictable displacement scenarios, that address the specific risks faced by women, children, and people with limited mobility, including in conflict-affected and fragile contexts
 - **Reducing vulnerability to climate-related risks in areas of return or settlement for displaced people** to enable safe, informed, and dignified solutions.^{iv}
 - **Supporting planned relocation** as a last resort measure that respects the human rights of communities living in increasingly unsafe and uninhabitable home areas.^v
- Make a portion of **climate funding accessible and dedicated to high-risk contexts** including through simplified or fit-for purpose processes and specialized windows for local actors to independently access multilateral funds.^{vi}

On technical and capacity building support

- Implement the COP-adopted **recommendations** from the **Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage and its Task Force on Displacement** on integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement associated with climate change impacts.
- Operationalise the **Santiago Network on Loss and Damage** to improve the quantity and accessibility of needs-led technical and capacity building support to the most climate vulnerable countries and communities, with attention to including refugees and other displaced persons, stateless persons, women, children, and others with specific needs.



Niger. Displaced by flooding, October 2021-UNHCR/Sylvian Cherkaoui

3. ENSURE DISPLACEMENT AND THE PROTECTION OF PEOPLE DISPLACED ARE INCLUDED IN COP27 DECISIONS AND IN NATIONAL LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS SUPPORTING CLIMATE ACTION WHERE IT IS MOST NEEDED

A range of existing legal and policy instruments on displacement provide frameworks and guidance for national authorities to strengthen the protection of people displaced within and across the borders of their countries as climate impacts increase. COP decisions play an important role in increasing attention and mobilizing support to people-centered climate policy and action that averts, minimizes and addresses displacement as a form of loss and damage and strengthens the adaptive capacities and resilience of people displaced or at risk of becoming so.

- **Include provisions on displacement and related forms of human mobility* in COP decisions**, particularly in relation to minimizing and addressing loss and damage and strengthening adaptive capacities in the most climate vulnerable and conflict-affected countries.
- Include provisions to adapt, prepare for and manage the risk and consequences of climate change and related crises **in national laws and policies addressing internal displacement issues**
- Ensure that **national (and local) adaptation plans** include provisions to reduce risk and enable sustainable solutions to displacement situations in the context of adverse climate change effects
- Apply **existing refugee and human rights law** where relevant to grant international protection to people displaced across borders in the context of climate impacts and disasters^{vii}.
- Consider granting **temporary or other rights to stay in another country on humanitarian grounds**, where applicable, in other situations where people displaced across borders are not eligible for refugee status.
- Strengthen the resilience of displaced people to climate shocks through law and policies that **facilitate their access to rights and basic services**, such as health, employment, housing, water, education, as well as access to life-saving early warning and preparedness measures, with particular attention to women, children and others with specific needs.

**“Human mobility” encompasses different forms of population movement related to the impacts of climate change and the diverse situations of people on the move. It includes (forced) “displacement,” (voluntary) “migration” and “planned relocation” (a measure of last resort when home areas become uninhabitable or too dangerous to live in), as referenced in the Cancun Adaptation Framework (para. 14f) and addressed by the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage’s rolling workplan.*

With one of the largest field presences of any humanitarian agency, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is working in some of the most fragile contexts where conflict and climate vulnerabilities meet – where millions of people are displaced and in urgent need of assistance and protection.

Visit [our webpage](#) to learn more about climate action at UNHCR

ⁱ [Principles for Locally Led Adaptation](#)

ⁱⁱ Heinrich Böll Stiftung [Unpacking finance for Loss and Damage](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership \(REAP\)](#)

^{iv} [Global Compact on Refugees](#); UN Secretary General’s [Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#)

^v UNHCR, Georgetown University, IOM (2016) [Planned Relocation Toolbox](#)

^{vi} ICRC, ODI, ICVA, Mercy Corps, Red Cross Climate Centre, UNHCR, WFP, [Embracing Discomfort: A Call to Enable Finance for Climate-Change Adaptation in Conflict Settings](#), October 2022.

^{vii} UNHCR, [Legal considerations regarding claims for international protection made in the context of the adverse effects of climate change and disasters](#), October 2020