

# DISASTER DISPLACEMENT

## ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN AFRICA AND THE ROLE OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION

### SUMMARY

- ✓ The number of internally displaced populations has continued to rise in the past two decades, with new disaster displacements jumping from 3.4 million in 2019 to 4.3 million people, to date.
- ✓ The main factors driving displacement in Africa are inequality, environmental degradation, climate change and the disproportionate impacts of disasters.
- ✓ A number of gender-based barriers and discrimination hinder migrants from enjoying their full human rights.
- ✓ Migrants and displaced populations provide important social and economic contributions to their countries of origin and destination, despite the myriad challenges that confront them.
- ✓ The shortage of disaggregated data, however, continues to hamper evidence-based policymaking and well-informed public discourse on migration and displacement in Africa.

### THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is the first intergovernmental agreement, prepared under the auspices of the United Nations, that covers all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It is grounded in international human rights law and reaffirms States' commitment to respecting, protecting and fulfilling all human rights for all migrants.

The Global Compact sets out 23 objectives, reinforced by specific commitments, that are intended to address challenges and enhance opportunities that pertain to migration. The commitments and actions of the Global Compact provide a useful guide for African States to meet their human rights obligations when designing migration governance measures that reduce the risks and vulnerabilities that migrants face at different stages of migration, and to create conducive conditions that empower all migrants to become active members of society.

The Global Compact refers extensively to the phenomena of migration, mobility and displacement. Objective 2 (a), (h), (j), (k) and (l) commit governments

and stakeholders to the development of comprehensive, gender-responsive and human rights-based measures to tackle the adverse and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin. Specifically, Objective 2 (j) encourages States to "integrate displacement considerations into disaster preparedness strategies and promote cooperation with neighbouring countries to prepare for early warning, contingency planning, stockpiling, coordination mechanisms, evacuation planning, reception and assistance arrangements, and public information". Objective 2 (l) further encourages States to take into consideration "relevant recommendations from State-led consultative processes, such as the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change, and the Platform on Disaster Displacement". Lastly, Objective 21 (b) stresses that "returning migrants are assisted in their reintegration process through effective partnerships, including to avoid they become displaced in the country of origin upon return".

Under the Global Compact, countries are encouraged to strengthen joint analysis and sharing of risk information to better map, understand, predict and address migration movements, such as those that may result from sudden-onset and slow-onset natural disasters, thereby fostering coherence with the priorities and principles of the Sendai Framework

for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. In addition, countries are urged to consider the adverse effects of climate change, and the need to develop adaptation and resilience strategies, including across borders, that take into account the potential implications on migration.

## **DISASTER DISPLACEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH**

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Examining the drivers of migration in a systematic and comprehensive manner is critical to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 10 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which makes a strong call to “leave no one behind”. Target 7 of Goal 10 – facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies – shows the Agenda’s strong focus on disadvantaged and marginalized population groups, who are often ignored. This target also represents a strong shift in the development approach.

The Africa Union and its Member States have developed strategies to tackle disaster risks. The Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in Africa is a good example: it can contribute towards the implementation of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, by providing a robust basis for protecting people displaced internally or across borders in the context of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation. These frameworks impose obligations on African States to prevent displacement, protect those displaced, and promote conditions

for safe return and reintegration, along with other durable solutions. The African Union Commission established the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction to support African countries in their efforts to coordinate and implement the Programme of Action. It is crucial to integrate disasters and displacement into regional and global frameworks. The Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development facilitates integrated actions for disaster risk reduction and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Similarly, the Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa fosters integrated actions for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

The limited availability of data disaggregated by gender, sex, socioeconomic status and other characteristics continues to hamper accurate mapping, analysis, understanding and prediction of risks associated with disaster displacement in Africa. To better understand these dynamics requires investment in data and a disaster information management system to collect, analyse, archive and predict displacement risks.

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### **Box 1:** Terminology (adopted from: Disaster Displacement: How to Reduce Risk, Address Impacts and Address Resilience. Words into Action Guidelines)

- a. Affected population  
This term refers to people who are affected, either directly or indirectly, by a hazardous event. Directly affected populations are those who have suffered injury, illness or other health effects; who were evacuated, displaced, relocated or have suffered direct damage to their livelihoods, economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets. Indirectly affected populations are people who have suffered consequences, other than or in addition to direct effects, over time, due to disruption or changes in economy, critical infrastructure, basic services, commerce or work, or social, health and psychological consequences.
- b. Disaster displacement  
Disaster displacement refers to situations in which people are forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence due to a disaster or to avoid the impact of an immediate and foreseeable natural hazard. Such displacement results from a situation in which the affected persons being exposed to a natural hazard are too vulnerable and lack the resilience to withstand the impacts of that hazard.
- c. Migration  
The term “migration” is used to describe movement that is predominantly voluntary. Movements that people make in an attempt to build their resilience and ability to adapt to slow-onset hazards and environmental change are referred to as “adaptation”.

#### **About the African Climate Policy Centre**

The African Climate Policy Centre is a hub for demand-led knowledge on climate change in Africa. It addresses the need for improved climate information and the strengthened use of such information for decision-making in Africa by improving analytical capacity, knowledge management and dissemination activities.

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