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Developing partnerships in the IGAD region

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How can partnerships and innovative approaches enhance policy coherence and effective policymaking in the IGAD region in the context of disasters and climate change?

Across the African continent, the adverse effects of climate change have intensified the frequency and severity of sudden and slow-onset hazards. In particular, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)¹ region is considered one of the most vulnerable to climate variability and change. It is home to more than 230 million people whose livelihoods and income are predominantly linked to agriculture, and more than two-thirds of the region is arid or semi-arid. The IGAD region is one of the most diverse regions in the world, including areas of economic growth and investment on the one hand, and areas prone to conflict, political instability, humanitarian crises and disasters on the other. It regularly faces a wide range of natural hazards, which lead to various forms of human mobility.

As recognised in the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), no country can address the challenges and opportunities of human mobility on its own, nor can it be addressed by any single policy sector alone. This is particularly true in view of the diversity and complexity underpinning the movement of people in disaster and climate change contexts. Risks and protection needs faced by these groups can be addressed through a number of measures and tools, including regular pathways for migration, integrated approaches to disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation and resilience-building, measures to support decent work and livelihoods, and migration as an adaptation strategy.

To this end, a number of UN agencies and partners established a Joint Programme² in February 2021 (funded under the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund³) to improve regional and national migration governance in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. This partnership aims to

contribute to implementing relevant international instruments⁴ and presents a unique opportunity to bring together the shared expertise and experience of different State and non-State actors in the IGAD region.

Working across silos: partnerships and collaboration

There is a wide range of instruments and policies at the regional and national levels that are relevant to human mobility and climate change. These include regional and national policies on migration, climate change, DRR, humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, development, labour, and urban planning.⁵ There is a clear need to facilitate policy coherence, policy dialogues and concrete action across these different policy areas, including through adequate financial, technical and capacity-enhancement support. The Programme's multi-stakeholder approach addresses all these goals and the pathways to achieving them.

The Programme implements interventions within existing IGAD structures⁶ at the regional, national and local levels. Partners work closely with national and local governments, and engage civil society, private sector and local communities affected or at risk of being affected by disasters, environmental degradation and climate change. The aim is to pursue whole-of-government, whole-of-society, people-centred approaches. The Programme also complements other initiatives related to human mobility in disaster and climate change contexts in the region.

The Programme has four interrelated areas of focus which are linked to four specific regional needs.⁷ One aspect of the Programme's work supports the inclusion of human mobility considerations across different policy areas, building on the findings and recommendations of a mapping

exercise⁸ on how human mobility is currently addressed in regional and national policies on DRR, climate change and development. The findings were discussed at a regional meeting in September 2021, and the discussion will continue at the local level in Kenya and Somalia to ensure that the recommendations are workable, realistic and community-owned.

The IGAD Free Movement of Persons Protocol (adopted in June 2021 by the IGAD Council of Ministers) reflects another area of focus which has also seen early success. Article 16 of the Protocol calls on Member States to facilitate entry and stay for people who are moving in anticipation of, during or in the aftermath of a disaster. This is the first time a Free Movement Protocol specifically addresses the needs of people affected by disasters. It provides a significant opportunity because it not only facilitates the entry and stay for those who are moving during or after a disaster but also allows those at risk of displacement to move pre-emptively. In addition, their stay will be extended as long as return to the country of origin is not possible or reasonable.

To advance the implementation of the Protocol and specifically Article 16, the Programme supports Member States' preparedness capacity, operational response, and regional and bilateral cooperation in cross-border disaster displacement. This will be implemented through developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which will be tested in cross-border areas potentially affected by disaster displacement.

Furthermore, the local solutions provided by the Programme promote labour mobility and the development of local labour markets in climate change and disaster-prone areas. They also increase knowledge on cross-border movements, international protection and migrants' rights and help enable sustainable development, a green economy and regular migration pathways.

Innovative approaches: risk modelling

To support policy-making processes, evidence is key. The Joint Programme is developing innovative solutions to addressing data gaps, and risk modelling is one of them.

Here a key challenge is to capture the complex relationship between vulnerability to disasters and to displacement, which is still poorly represented in academic research despite the increasing attention given to the concept in policy circles. The Programme aims to address this complexity by broadening the approach for assessing the level of disaster displacement risk.

Commonly, this is assessed by considering the type of hazard (for example, flood or cyclone), exposure to the hazard, and the level of people's vulnerability (which is mainly linked to physical characteristics of the housing sector). Through the Programme, technical partners are now applying a new risk model methodology that captures additional characteristics, such as livelihoods, to provide a more accurate picture of realities on the ground. A more holistic representation of vulnerability, including socio-economic elements, will help identify effective strategies to reduce vulnerability and, by extension, to reduce the number of people at risk of being forcibly displaced.

For example, people who depend on the primary sector of the economy (farming, herding, fishing, etc) – especially for subsistence – are at higher risk of displacement in case of sudden-onset disasters, because of the relatively greater impact on their livelihoods. This diversity in vulnerability is often not represented in current predictive models, mainly because of a lack of conceptual clarity on how 'vulnerability' can be captured but also due to the lack of disaggregated and local data. Interventions in this area typically focus on reducing the possible impacts of hazards on physical infrastructure (for example, disaster-proofing homes) and largely ignore interventions in other policy areas, such as access to labour markets and regular migration pathways.

The new methodology for modelling risk aims to provide a more comprehensive vulnerability assessment, considering three interlinked components in assessing the impact of disasters: 1) direct impact on properties and people, 2) direct impact on livelihoods and 3) indirect impact on critical

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facilities, services and livelihoods. The first element, already included in traditional disaster displacement risk models, provides an estimate of the number of people who need to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, disaggregated by age, sex and income. The second element goes beyond traditional risk models. It measures the direct impact of a disaster on people's sources of livelihood in terms of physical and economic loss (for example, the number of hectares damaged and animals lost). Thirdly, indirect impacts are considered (for example, longer-term impacts of prolonged lack of access to essential services), given that migration decisions also depend on access to sufficient food, potable water, and educational and health facilities.

The results of this more comprehensive assessment are integrated into disaster displacement risk profiles and incorporated into policymaking in order to define specific, localised and effective strategies for reducing people's vulnerability.

Early lessons and good practices

By bringing together the shared expertise and capacity of different partners under one governance structure, the Joint Programme can alleviate common coordination challenges and improve the quality of interventions. Although the engagement of different partners is highly beneficial, it has been acknowledged that planning and preparatory efforts take additional time. However, this can be mitigated with careful planning and by developing efficient processes throughout the implementation. The team has set up a monitoring, evaluation and learning system, and closely follows up on the process to ensure that activities are relevant, timely and lead to the intended results and success. Finally, it should be noted that many of the Programme components could be easily replicated or scaled up in other locations facing similar challenges, bearing in mind that all interventions must be tailored to the local context and realities.

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1. IGAD is one of the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) of the African Union, comprising Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.
2. Joint Programme: Addressing Drivers and Facilitating Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change in the IGAD Region bit.ly/Joint-Programme-IGAD
Partners include IOM, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), UNHCR, and the IGAD Secretariat including the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre.
3. The MPTF is the first and only UN inter-agency pooled funding instrument focusing on migration. It was called for by Member States through the adoption of the GCM (A/RES/73/195) in 2019. More information at www.migrationnetwork.un.org and <https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/MIG00>
4. Notably the GCM, the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2015 Paris Climate Change Agreement under the UNFCCC and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. It also takes forward the implementation of the African Union 3 Year Implementation Plan of Action for the GCM in Africa 2020-2022 and the IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of Persons adopted by IGAD Member States in June 2021.
5. See IOM (2014) *IOM Outlook on Migration, Environment and Climate Change* bit.ly/IOM-MECC-outlook-2014; and The Nansen Initiative (2015) *Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change. Volume I* <https://disasterdisplacement.org/the-platform/the-context>
6. Such as the National Coordination Mechanisms on Migration (NCM), the Regional Consultative Process on Migration (RCP), the Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF) and the Technical Working Groups on DRR and Climate Change.
7. 1) generate data to better map, understand, predict and address migration movements and the risk of displacement; 2) include disasters, the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation in national and regional migration and mobility policies, as part of climate change and disaster preparedness strategies; 3) strengthen preparedness and response capacity and coordination, through regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation; and 4) support implementation of regional and national human mobility frameworks to enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration, and for those displaced in the context of disasters, the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation – particularly for female migrants.

8. bit.ly/Nyandiko-Freeman-2020-IGAD

